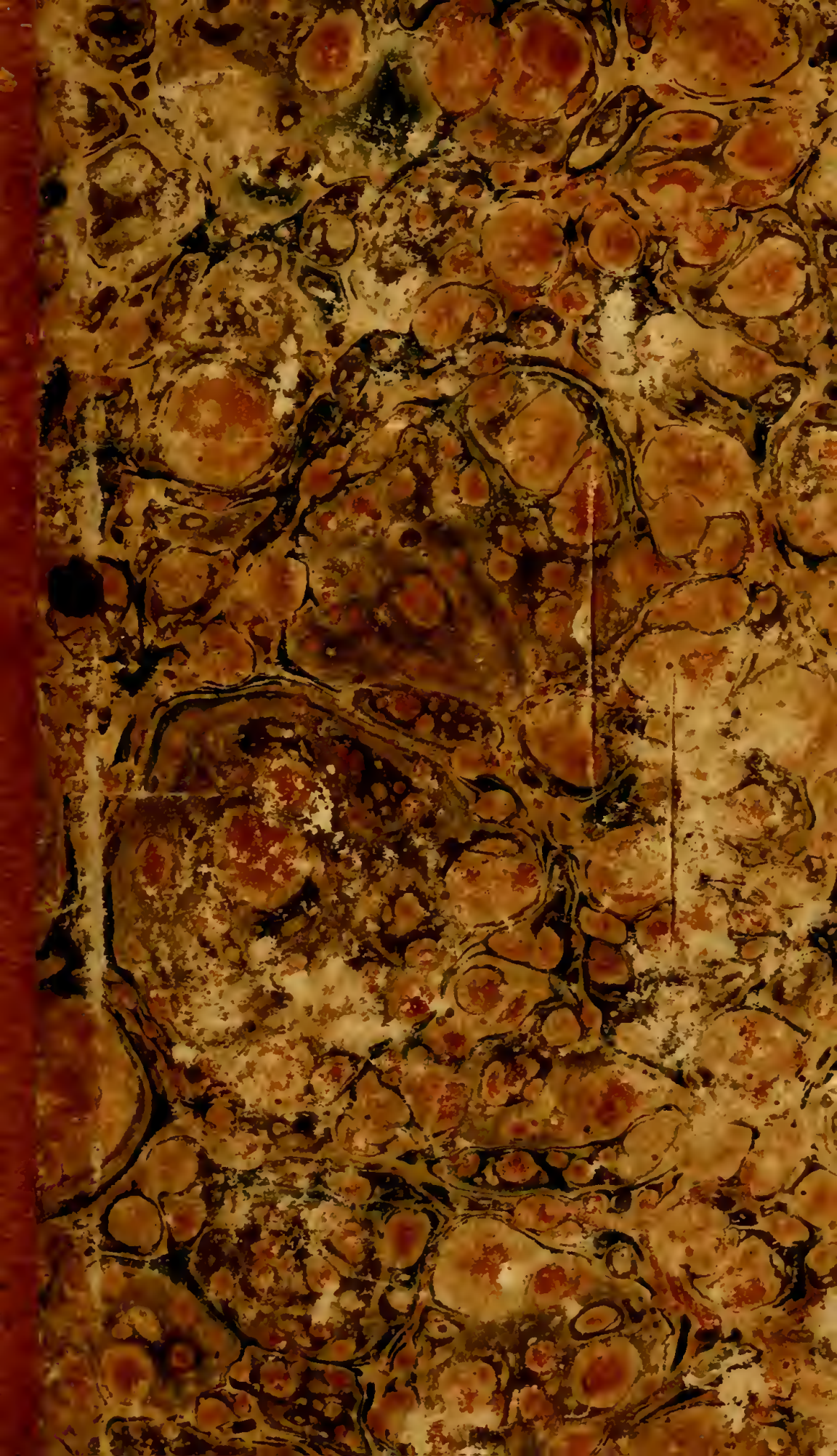

SCRIPTURE

ILLUSTRATIONS:

EXPLANATORY OF

Numerous Texts,

AND OF

VARIOUS CUSTOMS MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE.

WITH

TWENTY-EIGHT CUTS.

FIRST SERIES.

AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

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Ploughing in the East.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

ON THE METHOD OF PLOUGHING IN THE EAST.

The machines used by the eastern nations for ploughing, are constructed upon the same general principle, though with considerable variation. The whole power of these instruments, however, seems only adapted for what an English farmer would call scratching, rather than ploughing the earth. It is evident from the annexed sketch of the eastern plough while at work, that it can only operate upon the surface of the ground; and is not like the English machine, intended to turn up fresh earth, and subject it to the influences of the atmosphere. The plough-share of the latter, is a mass of iron of great strength and magnitude. Our swords are of a length and form

so ill adapted to be converted into English plough-shares, and applied to peaceful purposes, that we do not feel the full force of the delightful idea conveyed in the prophet's prediction, "they shall beat their swords into plough-shares," until we observe the plough-share employed by the oriental nations. It is a broad but not a large piece of iron, which tips the end of the shaft; and the swords of the ancient warriors were short and thick, so that a very little trouble indeed would convert them into plough-shares.

The oxen at plough will naturally remind the reader of several passages of Scripture, wherein this labour is referred to as performed by oxen: so we read in the 1 Kings xix. ver. 19, that Elisha "was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth." This great number of oxen suggests the idea of great riches in their owner; and as they appear to have been the property of Elisha himself, or at least of his family, they lead us to suppose that he would not have quitted so much wealth, nor have offered a yoke of his oxen as a farewell feast to his peo-

ple, as related in the two last verses of the chapter above quoted, previously to his departure to follow after Elijah, had he not been conscious of a divine power influencing his mind and directing his actions.

Ploughing in the East was not always performed at once going over the land; the first time it was done chiefly for the purpose of preparing it; after this the seed was sown, and a second ploughing answered the purpose of our harrowing, by covering the seeds previously committed to the ground. It was in short harrowing and ploughing combined in one operation. That the first ploughing was a work requiring attention, seems to be implied in the form of the phrase in Isaiah, xxviii. 24. "Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow?" literally, does he all day *plough plough?* The repetition of the last word signifying that second and lighter ploughing, which takes place after the seed is sown, and reduces to dust, those clods which could only be broken by the first operation.

In Genesis xlv. ver. 6, Joseph says to his brethren "and yet there are five years in the

which there shall neither be *earing* nor *harvest;*" here the youthful reader is in danger of confounding the sense in which the word earing was used, by the pious translators of our English Bible, and the modern meaning of the term. It was formerly employed by a figure of speech, to express cultivation of any kind, but is now literally restricted to the gathering of ripe ears of corn, and if taken in this sense, would mean the same thing as harvest, which certainly was never intended by the wise and learned translators above mentioned. They intended to express that Joseph said there shall be neither *ploughing* nor harvest. The same interpretation must be given to 1 Sam. viii. 12, where Samuel told the Israelites that the king whom they so much desired, would take their sons and set them to *ear his ground*, and to reap his *harvest*, that is to *cultivate* or *plough* his ground. Again in Exod. xxxiv. 21, "in *earing time*," that is, in *ploughing time*, "and in harvest thou shalt rest." In Deut. xxi. 4, "a rough valley which is neither *eared* nor sown," or neither *ploughed* nor sown.

Our blessed Lord says, Luke ix. verse 62, "No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." The ancient ploughs were so light that if the ploughman did not pay the greatest attention, and lean upon, and as it were, load it with the weight of his body, it would glide over the ground without making any furrows, and, of course, leave no impression behind. This beautiful allusion of the Redeemer, may not only be applied to the ministers of his gospel, but to all the members of his church on earth, and even to those who pursue things which are merely temporal. Without a fixed attention on the part of those who hear as well as those who preach, on the part of the ingenuous youth seeking after religious instruction and useful knowledge, as well as on the part of those who endeavour to assist him in the search, no trace can be left in the memory, and no impression remain upon the mind. Those who have been eminently pious or learned, and especially those who have united both these excellences, have invariably been remarkable for attentive, serious, and thought-

ful habits. They have not only put their hands to the plough in religion and science, but pressed upon it with the whole weight of their undistracted attention, never looking back.

In addition to the ploughman at his labour, our sketch presents a view of part of a cultivated field, the corn of which is nearly ripe: near this corn is a kind of stage, of more than one story in height, whereon sits a man to guard the corn from depredators of every kind, and especially from the birds.

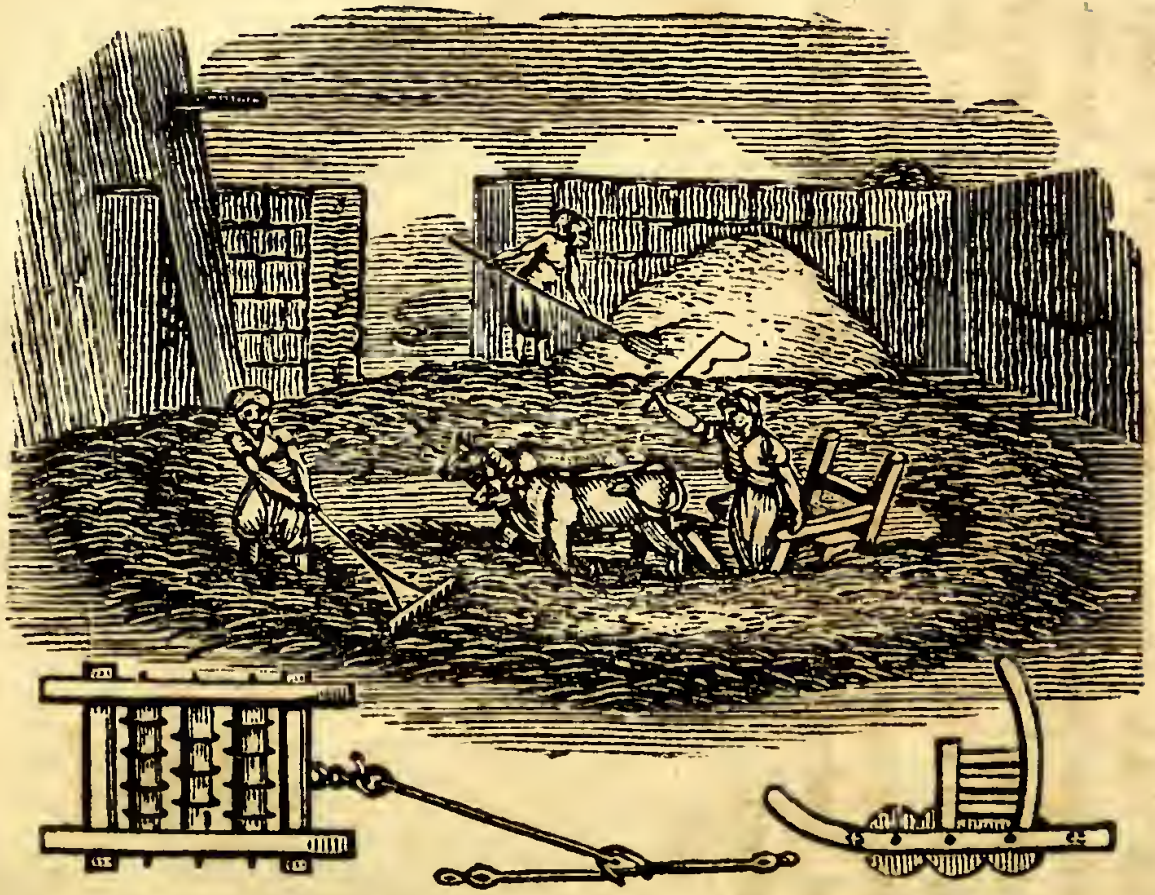
Egyptian Wheat.

THE EGYPTIAN WHEAT.

In reading the delightful history of Joseph, so interestingly detailed by the inspired writer, those who think while they read, may probably have supposed, that the wheat mentioned, Gen. xli. 5, in Pharaoh's dream, and which is said to have had *seven ears* full and good upon a single stalk, had no existence in nature, but was merely such a symbol as it pleased God to employ to forewarn the Egyptian king, of the coming years of plenty which were appointed to precede those of famine. This, however, was not the case, for there is a species of wheat still growing in Egypt, which actually bears seven ears upon a single stalk; and of this wheat this is an accurate sketch. The ear from which the original drawing was taken, not being grown in its native soil, had degenerated from its proper fulness, although, as our readers will see, it had *spread* enough to determine that it bore

seven ears of corn, and to demonstrate, that when full it must present a most expressive emblem of the greatest plenty. Those parts of this specimen which were perfect, are strongly shaded on the cut, while the rest are lighter. This wheat differs from our own, by having a solid stem, or at least a stem full of pith, in order to yield sufficient nourishment, and afford proper support to so great a weight as the ears which it bears, and which demand a proportionate quantity of nutritive juices: whereas the stem of our own wheat is a mere hollow straw. Our pious young friends will, no doubt, at once remark, that the exact agreement of this very peculiar kind of wheat, with that mentioned in the sacred volume, and of which Moses wrote more than 3500 years ago, found too in the very land where he was born, and so long sojourned, and growing to perfection no where else, is a most impressive natural evidence of the minute accuracy of the Bible. It has been cultivated by some of our ablest agriculturalists, who find that it produces more than any other kind of wheat, but though the grain

is fine of its sort, it does not suit our markets, principally because, as already intimated, it soon degenerates here, as our country is not the soil and climate for which Providence has adapted it; for it is a well known agricultural maxim, that every plant thrives best, and will only bear to perfection in its native country, or in such other climates as most resemble that from which it was first obtained.



Method of Threshing in the East.

ON THE MANNER OF THRESHING IN THE EAST.

To introduce the information furnished by this sketch, we shall first notice the *threshing floor;* which is a level, smooth area, enclosed by mud-brick walls, having a proper opening for entrance, and on one side of it the barn or garner, the door of which is seen in the wall. The area enclosed by these walls is either prepared, according to the account of Dr. Shaw, or naturally smooth, hard, and bound, so as to be fit for using without preparation. The figures at the lower corner of the plate, represent the wain, car, cart, drag, or threshing instrument, so called by different translators of the Sacred Scriptures. In the left hand figure, it is supposed to be set upright on one of its sides, and appears to consist of a strong square frame, well secured with iron pins to keep it tight and steady: within this are three rollers, whose pins at each end are inserted into the frame, and pass through it; on each of these rollers are circular iron *cutters*, with

sharp edges, the track of which lies *between* that of the other cutters which compose the instrument, and it is these cutters that are furnished with teeth, which are alluded to in the forty-first chapter and fifteenth verse of the prophet Isaiah.

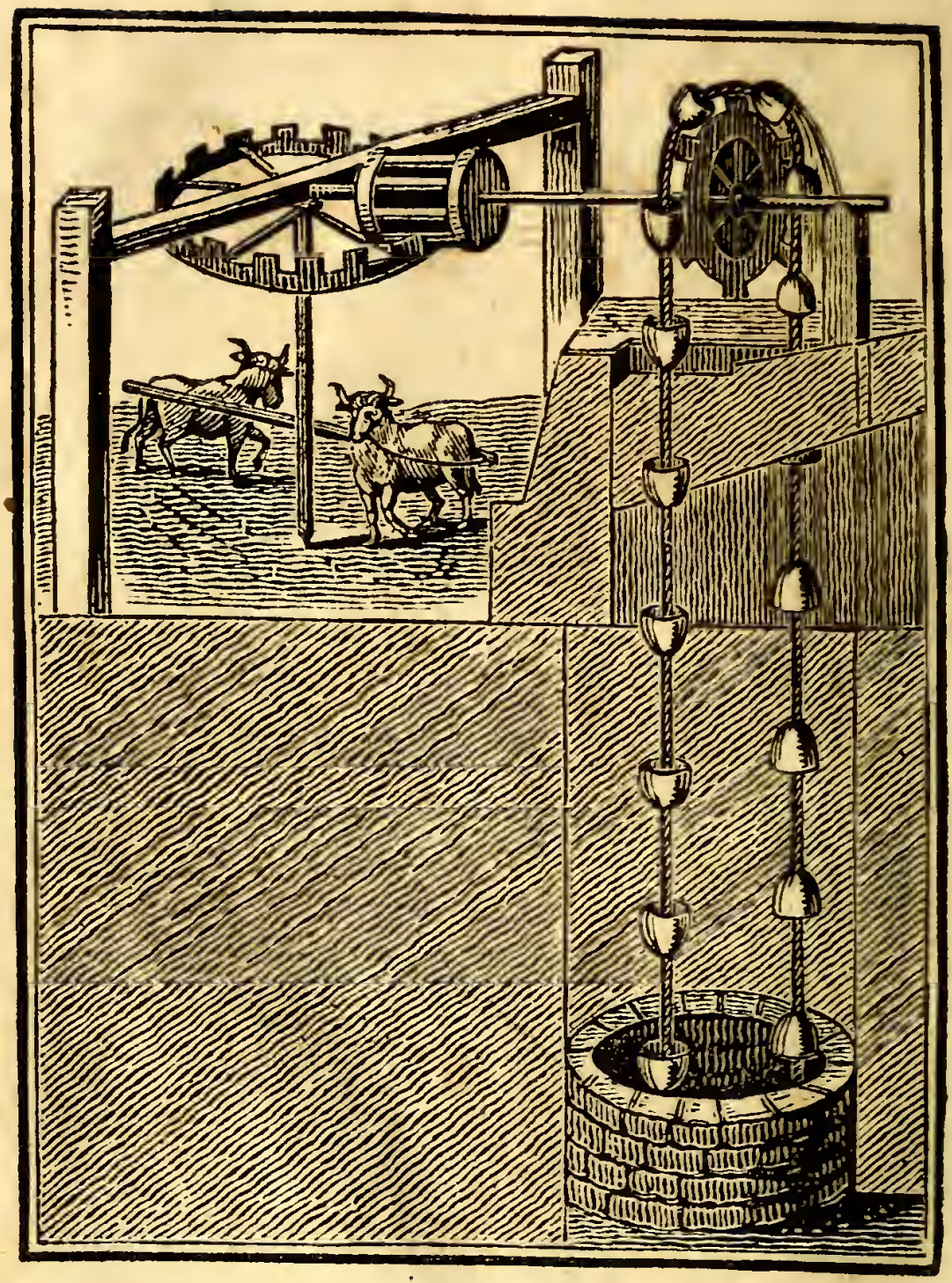
The right hand figure is an elevation, or side view of the same instrument, which shows that the external square frame turns upward in front, that it may more readily pass over the straw that lies before it. The pins which mark the insertion of the rollers are also seen: and from this frame rises a seat, or kind of chair, for the convenience of the driver. The yoke is represented in connexion with the left hand figure, to which it joins by rings and a hook which allow of free motion: and the other end, which is borne by the oxen, is equally constructed for securing the same advantage.

The principal subject of this draught, shows the manner of using this machine, and presents, what it proposes to illustrate, in a more lively manner to the eye than it is possible for the best written account to describe.

Beyond the circle of corn strewed for threshing, a man is engaged in winnowing a quantity of corn, which is already threshed by throwing it up against the wind, which blows away the chaff, but leaves the grains of corn; the weight of which ensures their falling down. Observe the form of the *fan* used by this figure: it resembles a small shovel, with a long handle; unlike any kind of corn fan, or winnowing machine, used in England: the representation of it, therefore, is well adapted to correct whatever erroneous conceptions of the instrument, the reader might heretofore have entertained.

The number of passages in Scripture which may be explained or illustrated by means of these delineations, is too great to be enumerated here; and the youthful reader will find it a delightful task to search his Bible for and compare them with this account. We shall, however, refer him to the seventh verse of the fifteenth chapter of Jeremiah, and especially to the twelfth verse of the third chapter of St. Matthew, where the process of winnowing with the fan is alluded to.

We remark in conclusion, that we here see the import of the phrase 'thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn," as applied by the apostle to ministers—that is, "it is not fit that he who contributes to prepare food for others should be denied a suitable portion of sustenance for himself." And it is a remarkable fact, that among all the nations of the East, the oxen which tread out the corn never were, and to this day are *not* muzzled, although they always were and still are muzzled when employed in any other kind of labour.



Eastern Method of Watering the Land.

EASTERN METHOD OF WATERING THE LAND.

The annexed is a representation of the Persian Wheel, given upon the authority of Dr. Shaw, in order to elucidate several passages of Scripture. While one division of the buckets descends empty, the rotation of the wheel brings the other up full of water. The machinery worked by cattle, is easily understood. Engines and contrivances of this kind, are placed all along the banks of the river Nile, from the sea to the cataracts; their respective situations being higher, and consequently, the difficulty of raising water greater, the farther we advance up that river.

This method of conveying moisture, and nourishment to a land that is rarely refreshed with rain, is often alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, where also it is made the distinguishing quality betwixt Egypt and the Promised Land, or Canaan. "The land," says Moses to the children of Israel, Deut. xi. 10, 11—"whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came

out; where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, like as a garden of herbs: —But the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven."

The meaning of the remarkable expression "wateredst it with thy foot," we shall endeavour to explain in our next subject; but for the present, shall confine ourselves to the Persian Wheel here depicted.

The simile used by Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 7, —"He (meaning Israel) shall pour the water out of his *buckets*," refers to this agricultural custom, as do the words of the prophet Isaiah xl. 15,—"Behold, the nations are as a drop of a *bucket*."

The original word in the 3d verse of the cxli. Psalm, which our translators have rendered door, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, keep the *door* of my lips," appears to have been mistaken for the *drop* of my lips, in allusion, like the passage just quoted from the prophet Isaiah, to the dropping from the buckets of the machines, employed in watering lands. Job xxix. 22,—says, "My speech

dropped upon them." And the allusion of the Psalmist, implies that not only his set speeches, his open and admitted discourse, required to be guarded, but also his accidental remarks, his by-words, his hints, and the smallest particles of speech which dropped from his lips.

Whoever pays attention to what passes in his own heart, and in the world, will find ample reason to pray God for a watch and a strict watch too, over the door of his lips. Job xxxviii. 37,—compares the clouds to the buckets in the wheels of the machine, which do not discharge their contents till they arrive at the top of the wheel, where they are gradually laid along, and their mouths inclined downwards. By the words, "Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or who can stay the bottles of heaven," Job certainly alludes to such buckets which come up full, but are emptied only at the proper time, neither sooner nor later; but when wisdom and power combine to lay them along; and this in the instance of the clouds, as he beautifully intimates, requires Divine appointment and superintendence.

Chinese Method of Watering the Land.

CHINESE METHOD OF WATERING THE LAND.

This machine consists of a box, divided into two parts, the under part wholly enclosed; one end of this box is laid on the lower water, the other end is raised to a proper level; a number of boards adapted to the size of this enclosure, are drawn up it by the power of the wheel, and with these boards the water rises also: for it cannot flow out on the side, nor at the top, nor at the bottom, since these are enclosed; neither can it flow out behind, since there the rising board stops it: it must therefore rise before the board which impels it, till it arrives at the orifice for its discharge into the upper level.

When the board has thus discharged its lading, it is continued in its course over the wheel, is carried back again, down the upper groove of the box, and, when arrived at the lower water, is ready to resume its former application, of closing the lower division of the

box, and forcing the water it finds there to ascend.

A succession of these boards maintains a constant stream, and thus furnishes water from the lower grounds to the higher, even enough to assist in the cultivation of rice, which is always when young, overflowed with water. We ought to observe, that Moses, in Deuteronomy xi. 10. (see the preceding article) is speaking of an extensive cultivation, such as of corn lands; for he evidently distinguishes it from a garden, or plantation, by making such cultivation the object of his comparison; where thou sowedst thy seed and wateredst it with thy foot; *like as a garden of herbs*, that is, in the same manner.

This ingenious mode of watering has been resorted to in Palestine, and also in Egypt; indeed, from certain passages in Philo, an ancient Greek writer, who flourished at Alexandria in the first century, it appears there is strong reason to conclude that the Chinese borrowed this invention from the Egyptians; for Philo describes a machine for watering lands so strongly resembling this, which was

taken from Sir George Staunton's account of Lord Macartney's Embassy to China, that it appears to be the very same. This, together with the similarity which long subsisted between the Egyptians and Chinese seems to suggest that they either were formerly one people, or, being immediately derived from one common stock, had naturally communicated their manners, customs, principles, knowledge, and inventions to each other.

Raising Water from the Nile.

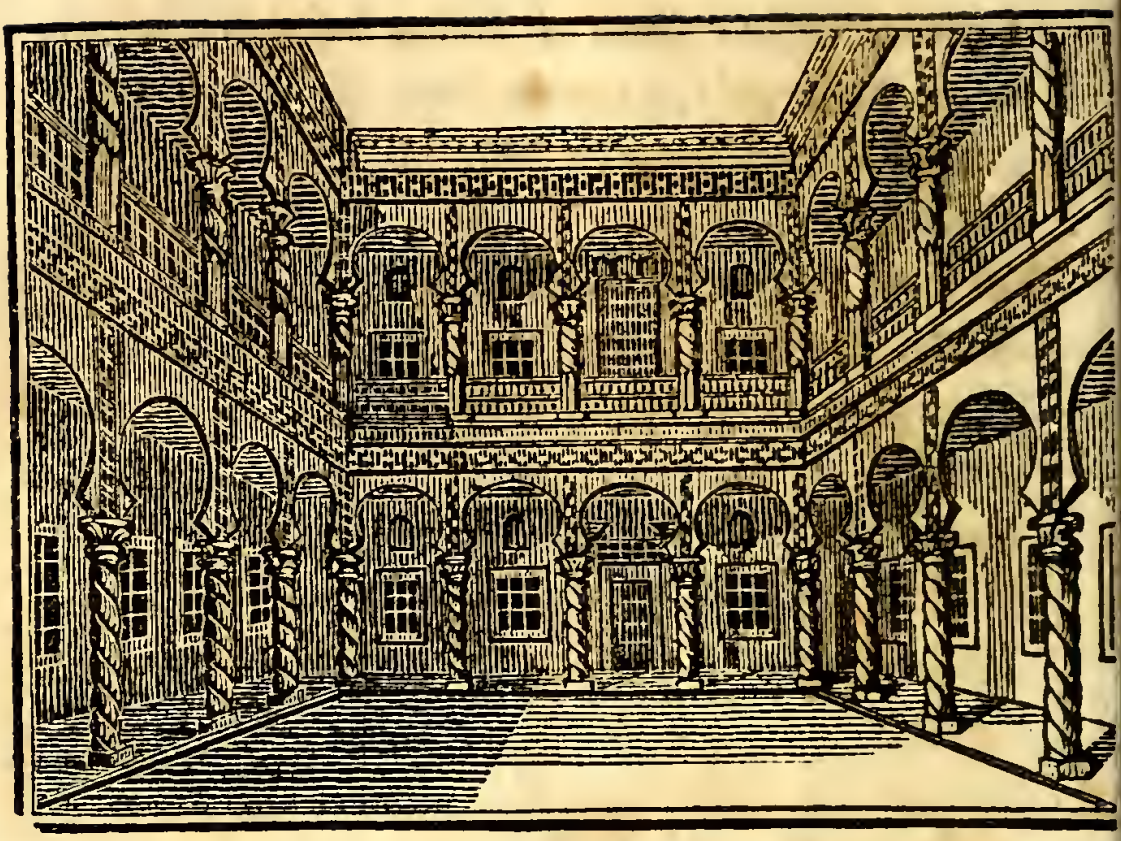
ARABS RAISING WATER FROM THE NILE.

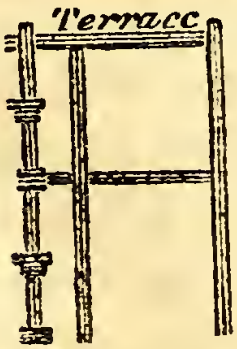
In Egypt, the rice grounds are inundated from the time of sowing nearly to harvest: the seed is commonly cast upon the water, a practice twice alluded to in Scripture. Balaam, prophesying of Israel, Numbers xxiv. 7, says "His seed shall be in many waters;" and Solomon, when speaking of acts of charity, in his beautiful exhortations, Eccl. xi. 1, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days," finely intimates, that as he who commits the seed to the waters, which is the mode of sowing in that country, always reaps, after a certain interval, the abundant recompense of his labour, so they that regard the sufferings of the distressed, and cast their bread upon the waters, by feeding the hungry, or clothing the naked, shall in no wise lose their reward, but find it after many days. This custom completely elucidates the meaning of the preacher, which has been greatly mistaken by many, who suppose that his al-

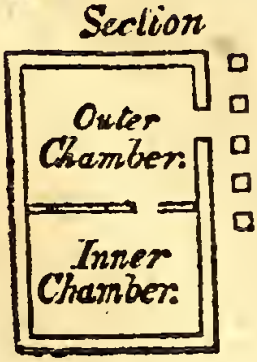
lusion was to bread cast into the rivers, or upon the waters of the ocean: it is obvious this could seldom, if ever, be found again, for substances of that kind would soon sink or be disposed of by birds or fishes.

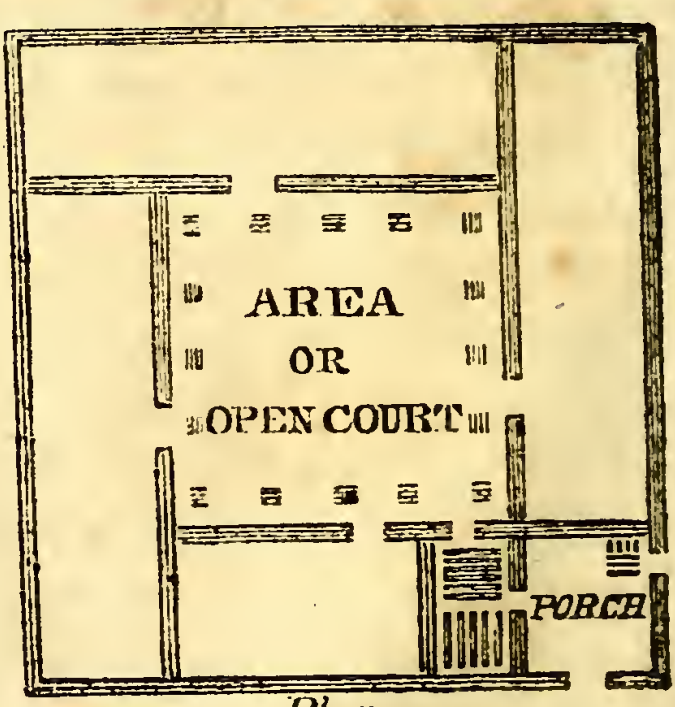
In order to cover the lands with the water upon which they cast their seed, various methods are employed by the Egyptians. To raise the waters of the Nile into the high ground near the river, they use buckets fastened to a wheel, something like those used to some of our deep wells; but where the land is not much elevated above the surface of the river, they employ the simple and probably very ancient contrivance of lifting it in a basket apparently lined with close matting, or leather. This is the mode represented: two men holding the basket between them, by a cord in each hand, fastened to the edge of it, lower it into the Nile, and then swing it between them, until it acquires a velocity sufficient to enable them to throw the water over a bank, into a canal near the river. The regular continuance of their motion, gives them at a distance, the appearance of automaton

figures, rather than of living beings. They work with only a coarse sort of cotton shirt girded round their loins, and sometimes entirely naked, exposed to the sun's most powerful rays during the whole day, repeating one of the Arabian songs; for they seem to have a peculiar air adapted to every kind of labour.









Plan.

Houses of the East.

ON THE HOUSES OF THE EAST.

The annexed sketch represents the internal elevation, ground plan, and section of the terrace, of one of the houses of the east, which, like those of the cities upon the coast of Barbary, are known to have been built in nearly the same form for many ages. They are remarkable for enclosed courts and spacious chambers, so that a single house often accommodates several families; as when parents indulge their married children with a share of their habitation; or when several persons contribute towards the rent, to this our Lord seems to allude, where he says, "in my father's house are many mansions." Hence it is that the cities of the Levant, though they generally occupy less ground than those of Europe, are so exceedingly crowded and populous, that many persons fall victims to the plague, and other contagious maladies.

The streets of these cities, the better to shade them from the sun, are usually narrow, with sometimes a range of shops on each side. The door of the porch, and one latticed window, or balcony, only, open into the street, all the rest of the windows, as above, look into the court. This external balcony is seldom used,

except during public festivals—at one of these, probably, Jezebel showed herself to Jehu, 2 Kings ix. 30, when "she painted her face, tired her head, and looked out at a window."

The court is usually surrounded with galleries, not unlike those which may be remarked in old inns. Into these galleries the spacious chambers of each floor open, having no communication with each other but what the galleries afford. The stairs sometimes begin in the porch (see the ground plan) and are afterwards continued through some one corner of each gallery to the top of the house, upon which they terminate in a door; but they are generally carried up on the outside of the house: This may elucidate the injunction, Matt. xxiv. 17, "Let him which is upon the house top not come down to take any thing out of his house," for he might directly descend the stairs, and pass into the street, without entering into any apartment of the house; or could escape to the city gates by passing along the house tops, as we shall presently proceed to show.

The house top which is invariably flat and covered with a strong plaster of terrace, or cement, is on that account often called, *The*

Terrace. It is generally enclosed by two walls, the highest towards the street; the other, which is always breast high, in scripture called the *battlements*, Deut. xxii. 8, answering to our parapet, overhangs the court. Balustrades and lattice work are sometimes used in its stead; and upon such a slight support, Ahaziah, 2 Kings i. 2, might be thoughtlessly leaning when he fell down into the court. Upon these terraces or house tops, the inhabitants dry linen and flax, Josh. ii. 6, and as a late traveller has observed, figs and raisins. Here also the families assemble to enjoy the cool refreshing breezes of the evening; and converse with one another; to which those words of our Lord, Matthew x. 27, and Luke xii. 3, refer: "what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house tops." "And that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house tops:" on the terrace they frequently offer up their devotions; here Peter prayed, Acts x. 9, and afterwards "fell into a trance." In the feast of tabernacles, booths were erected, Neh. viii. 16, upon the roofs, along which, (as we have already hinted) when the cities are built upon level ground, there is a passage

from the city gate at one end of the place, to a similar gate at the other, without any necessary communication with the street. The inhabitants sometimes sleep upon the roof. Here also the idolatrous kings and people of Judah, (see Jeremiah xix. 13, and xxxii. 29.) worshipped "the Host of Heaven," and "offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink-offerings unto other gods."

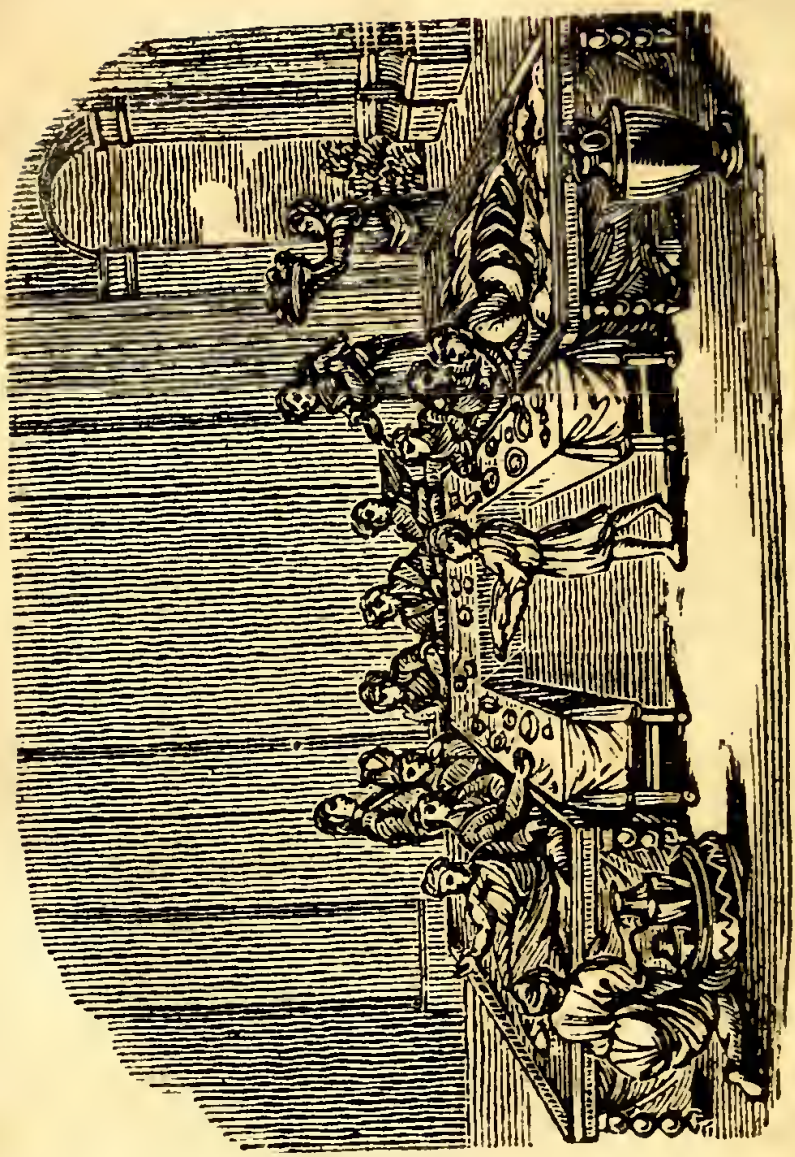
Sometimes a small room is built over the porch and set apart for strangers; or for occasional privacy and retirement; such seems to have been the little chamber built by the Shunamite for Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 10, and the summer chamber of Eglon, through which Ehud escaped, Judges iii. 23, 24, after he had killed the Moabitish king,—and the chamber over the gate where David retired to weep for Absalom, 2 Sam. xviii. 33, from the roof of which his watchman, verse 24, described the man running alone: such also might be the chamber where Tabitha was laid after death, Acts ix. 37, and particularly that in the third loft, (or gallery) from the window of which Eutychus fell down, Acts, xx. 9.

The eastern mode of building, helps us to account for the particular structure of the

house of Dagon, Judges xvi. 25, and the great number that were slain when Samson pulled down the pillars, by which the galleries and part of the roof were supported. In the Dey of Algiers' palace, which is a structure enclosing an open court, like that we have here depicted, such entertainments as the lords of the Philistines gave in the house of Dagon, are frequently given; at which times the galleries and roof are crowded with spectators pressing upon each other to look down into the court, where persons are placed, like Samson, "to make them sport:" and hence the destruction that ensued when he pulled the pillars from beneath the Philistines, which must have precipitated them headlong into the court.

We shall now request the attention of our readers to the open court itself, to inform them that as the heat is excessive in those countries, a curtain or awning is spread over it from battlement to battlement, to exclude the rays of the sun, and is, therefore, called the *court veil*, or *curtain*. To this David beautifully alludes, Psalm civ. 2, "who stretchest out the heavens like *a curtain*." This court is strewed with mats and carpets for the reception of large companies, which are seldom

admitted into any apartment of the house itself. This strengthens many other obvious reasons for concluding that our blessed Redeemer and his apostles, frequently taught in these open areas, or courts; and that at least he was preaching in one of them at the healing of the paralytic: so that the uncovering and breaking up of the roof, Mark ii. 4, and letting the paralytic down through the tiling, as it has been translated, in conformity with our ideas of houses, means nothing more than the removing or taking up of the curtain, court veil, or awning, and letting the sick person down upon his bed into the court beneath. It is probable, therefore, that those words, Luke v. 19, "into the midst," refer to the centre of such a court, area, or quadrangle. It appears from the same verse, that the bearers could not directly approach our Lord "for the press," but if the paralytic could not be carried up the stairs through the crowd, he might easily be taken to the house top from the adjoining terraces, and from thence be let down over the battlements, "into the midst (of the court) before Jesus."



Ancient Attitude at Table.

ANCIENT ATTITUDE AT TABLE.

The reclining attitude here represented, as having been anciently used at table, appears to us to be extremely inconvenient, and yet we have abundant evidence that it actually was adopted by both Greeks and Romans, and we also find it often alluded to by the four evangelists.

The reader is desired to notice first, the construction of the table, which consists of *three* tables, so set together as to form but one. Secondly, around these tables are placed no seats, but as it were *couches* or *beds*, one to each table; each of these beds being united to surround the three tables; at the end of each was a foot-stool for the conveniency of mounting up to it; these beds were formed of mattresses stuffed, and were supported upon frames of wood, which were often highly ornamented. Thirdly, observe the attitude of the guests, each *reclines* on his left elbow, and therefore chiefly uses his right hand, that only

being free for use: observe also, that the feet of the person reclining being towards the external edge of the bed, they were much more readily reached by any body passing, than any other part of the person so reclining. The way for the service of the tables appears left open in the front, the table being enclosed at one end, and it is worthy of remark, that when the tables were withdrawn, the couches might remain.

For want of proper discrimination and description, in respect to the attitude at table, several passages of the gospel are not merely injured as to their true sense, but appear to be absolute nonsense; in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses of the seventh chapter of St. Luke, "a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus SAT at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet BEHIND HIM weeping; and began to *wash his feet* with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed *his feet*, and anointed them with the ointment." Now, when a person sits at meat, according to those ideas, which natu-

rally suggest themselves to an English reader of the passage, his feet, beside being on the floor under the table, are BEFORE him and not *behind* him; and the impossibility of a person standing at his feet *behind* him, standing too, to kiss his feet and to wipe them, is glaring. However, by inspecting our print, the narration becomes intelligible, for the feet of a recumbent person being *outermost*, must of course, be easily accessible to any person standing behind them. The same observations apply to the second and third verses of the twelfth chapter of St. John, "Lazarus was one who *sat*, that is *reclined at table* with Jesus, and Mary anointed the feet of Jesus."

Assisted by these ideas, we may better understand the history of our Lord's washing his disciples' feet, John xiii. verse 5; "he poureth water into a basin, and going round the beds whereon the disciples reclined, *he began to wash the disciples' feet*, which lay on the external edge of the couch, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded;" again at the twelfth verse, "after he had taken his garments and was *reclined again*, he said,

&c." It would perhaps be overstraining our remarks, to apply them to any of those slighter incidents recorded in sacred history, which we therefore leave as an exercise for our young readers; but it is, nevertheless, proper to notice, how justly the beloved disciple John might be said "to lie in Jesus' bosom" at the supper table, since this will clearly appear by inspecting the position of the guests in our plate.

Mode of Sitting in the East.

ON THE MODE OF SITTING IN THE EAST.

In the last account we endeavoured to illustrate the ancient mode of sitting *at table;* and to complete the subject, we here present our readers with a sketch and description of the common mode of sitting in the east.

The expression *sitting* in our translation of the Sacred Scriptures, is applied to different attitudes; and we here propose to show what that kind of sitting is, which ordinarily prevails among oriental nations.

The place for sitting is a kind of raised settle, bench, or elevated floor, about two feet high, running along one or more sides of a room, extending about three feet from the wall, and covered with a carpet or scarlet cloth. This raised floor is called the Duan or Divan. The cushions, which are set upright along the wall, reach in that position to the arms of the person sitting, as in the preceding representation. They are ornamented with flowers, embroidery, or brocade; and are made of such sizes as can be conveniently removed; hence one cushion will not serve the whole side of a room: so that several are joined together for that purpose.

The figure here represented, occupies the corner, which is the place of honour in the east, probably, because the best adapted for ease in leaning, by the opportunity it presents of reclining upon two cushions at once. The attitude of the person sitting, is usually by crossing the legs, and folding them under the body: sometimes varying the posture by folding one leg only, or principally, and sitting upon the heel of it, leaning upon the cushion behind. The celebrated traveller Niebuhr says, "As the floors are spread with carpets, and cushions are laid round the walls, one cannot sit down without inconvenience on the ground; and the use of chairs is unknown in the east.

"The Arabians practice several different modes of sitting. When they wish to be very much at their ease, they cross their legs under the body. I found, indeed, by experience, that this mode of sitting is the most commodious for people who wear long clothes and wide lower garments without any confining ligatures, and appears to afford better rest after fatigue, than our posture of sitting upon chairs. In the presence of superiors, (see 1 Chron.

xvii. 16, where David is said to have 'sat before the Lord,') an Arab sits with his two knees touching each other, with the weight of his body resting upon his heels: and as in this position a person occupies less room than in any other, this is their usual posture at table: I often tried it; but found it so extremely uneasy, that I could never acquire the habit."

As it is our particular wish to illustrate, as far as we are able, those scripture phrases which relate to customs that are unusual to our young readers, and which they cannot, therefore, properly understand, we shall now observe how easily the cushion and carpet which form this kind of seat are carried, so that even in a tent it may be instantly prepared. It appears that the cushion is not sat *upon* but *against*, so that to *prepare a seat*, as mentioned in the seventh verse of the twenty-ninth chapter of Job, may be well understood of laying a carpet and placing a cushion upon it. And it explains also the sixth verse of the fourth chapter of St. John, where "Jesus being weary with his journey, sat *thus* ON the well;" that is, he leaned *accordingly* like a weary person *against* the side of the well.

Perhaps the youthful reader never yet has understood the true attitude assumed by the dying Jacob, when the sons of Joseph were brought to receive his blessing; "he strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed"—*the duan;* and, after blessing his grandsons—"gathered up his feet," *not into the bed*, but drew them *upon* the duan. This also explains the attitude of Ahaz, (1 Kings xxi. 4,) "He laid him down upon his bed and turned away his face." Also, how Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 2,) "turned his face to the wall and prayed." Also, how Haman, (Esther vii. 8,) not only "stood up to make request for his life," but was fallen on the bed—*the duan*—whereon Esther was." Finally, the above explanation completely illustrates the nature of Saul's order to bring up David to him on the bed, that he might kill him, 1 Sam. xix. 15.

Further citations cannot here be introduced: but he that follows up this interesting subject for himself, will reap great satisfaction in the light which it tends to throw upon many other parts of the Sacred Scriptures.

View of Bethlehem.

VIEW OF BETHLEHEM.

Bethlehem, or the House of Bread, so often mentioned in the Word of God, is principally remarkable for the nativity of our Blessed Lord, Matt. ii. 5, 6, John vii. 42; it is six miles south from Jerusalem. The town covers the summit of a long and lofty hill, on the southern side of a deep and extensive valley, in which valley the celebrated traveller, Dr. E. D. Clark, believes he found that remarkable well, for the water of which David longed, when he said, 1 Chron. xi. 17, "Oh! that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is at the gate."

The well appears to retain its original renown, and many an expatriated Bethlehemite has since made it the theme of his longing and regret. To the left, on the neighbouring hill, a monastery, resembling a vast fortress, covers the spot which is shown as the cave of the Nativity. It is remarkable, that as the

vanquisher of Goliath was a native of Bethlehem, so Elhanan, who slew the brother of that Philistine, was likewise a Bethlehemite.

Near Bethlehem, Rachel was buried, Gen. xlviii. 7, and Ibzan, one of the Judges of Israel, Judges xii. 10,—Naomi and her two sons, Ruth i. 1, and David the great king of Israel, were all natives of this place, which was, therefore, of considerable note, before it became so universally celebrated for the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eastern Bottles.

ON THE EASTERN BOTTLES.

This is a representation of the bottles mentioned in the word of God; which among the ancient Jews, were made of goats' or wild beasts' skins, with the hair on the inside, well sewed and pitched together; an aperture in one of the animal's paws serving for the mouth of the vessel. Bottles of this kind are still used for carrying water through the deserts of Arabia and other countries, where springs and streams are scarce, and have been in common use both in ancient and modern times.

The vessels, however, which are called *bottles* in our translation of the old Testament, are signified by different terms in the original, and were of various and different materials. Thus in Gen. xxi. 14, the "bottles" of water given by Abraham to Hagar, is in the original called, *Chemeth*, which denotes an earthen pitcher, although Sir John Chardin supposes it to have been a leathern vessel: and from Habakkuk ii. 15, it appears that the Hebrews

were accustomed to drink out of these *chemeths*. The bottle of wine which Samuel's mother brought to Eli, (1 Sam. i. 24,) is called *nubel*, and was probably an earthen jar or jug. The same word is also used in 1 Sam. x. 3, and 2 Sam. xvi. 1; but the term translated earthen bottles in Jer. xix. 1, is *bakbek*. A very different word is used in Judges iv. 19, to signify the vessel out of which Jael gave milk to Sisera; it is called *naud;* which having some reference to moist or oozing, was probably made of goat skin, or the skin of some animal; and being constantly kept full of milk, was preserved in a pliant state. The same word is also used to denote the bottle in which Jesse sent wine by David to Saul, 1 Sam. xvi. 20. *Naud* signifies also the bottle into which the Psalmist (Psalm lvi. 8,) desires that his tears might be collected, and that to which he compares himself, Psalm cxix. 83; he says, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke," that is, like a bottle kept in the tents of the Arabs, blackened with smoke. To the meanness of such a drinking vessel as a goat's skin bottle, as well as to the

blackness contracted in the Arab tent, the Psalmist probably refers, and it was a most natural image for him to use: driven from among the vessels of silver and gold in the palace of Israel, to live as the Arabs did, and consequently to be obliged frequently to drink out of a smoked leathern bottle. The word used by Job, chap. xxxii. 19, is *abuth*, the plural of *aub*, which signifies, in general, to swell or distend, and properly expresses a skin bottle, which would be apt to swell by pouring liquor into it; and would be distended, and burst at last, if it had no vent, and the liquor happened to be in a state of fermentation.—From which we perceive the propriety of putting new wine into new bottles, according to the appropriate allusion in Matt. ix. 17. Mark ii. 22. Luke v. 37, 38, which being moist and strong, would resist the fermentation and preserve the wine; whereas old bottles of this kind, being more dry and brittle, would be in danger of bursting, and were best adapted to receive old wine which had ceased to ferment. The sacred historian, Joshua ix. 4, not only supposes these bottles

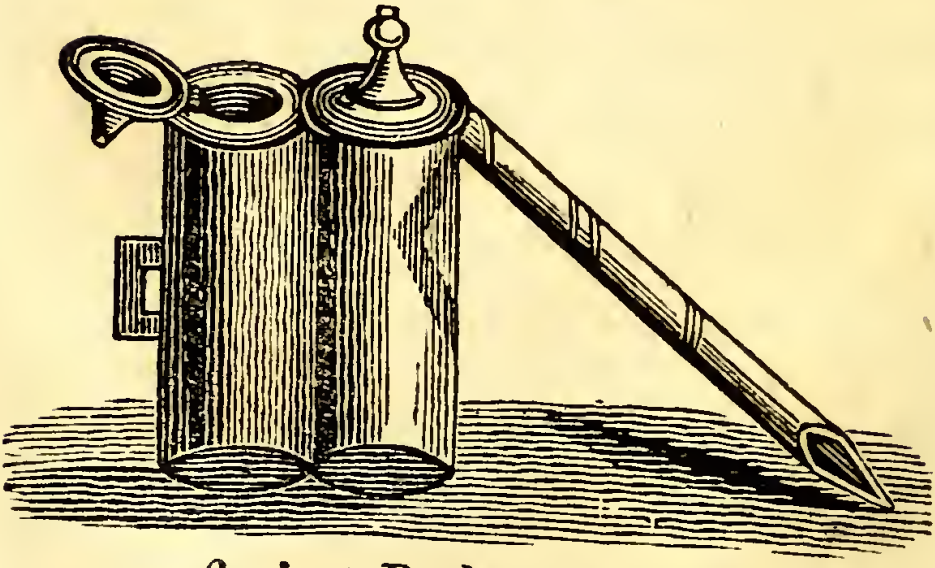
to be frequently rent, when grown old and much used, but to admit of being repaired. They are mentioned by Homer, Virgil, Sallust, and Horace; nor have they escaped the observation of modern travellers. The Arabs, says Sir John Chardin, and all those who lead a wandering life, keep their water, milk, and other liquors in these bottles, which will preserve their contents fresher than any other kind of vessel. They are made, he says, of goat skins; when the animal is killed, they cut off its feet and its head, and so draw off the skin without opening the belly. The places where the legs and tail were cut off, are afterwards sewn up, and when it is filled, they tie it about the neck. These nations, and the country people of Persia, never go a journey without a small leathern bottle of water, hanging by their side like a scrip. The great leathern bottles are made of the skin of a she goat, and the small ones that serve to hold water on the road, of a kid skin. The same traveller says, that the Persians find leathern bottles useful in keeping water fresh, especially if they take care to moisten them,

when travelling, wherever they can find water; the evaporation serving to keep the water cool. He adds, that the disagreeable taste of the leather is taken off, by causing it to imbibe rose water, when it is new, and before it is applied to use. The Persians are said formerly to have perfumed these leathern vessels with mastic or with incense. From him also we learn, that they put into these goat skin and kid skin vessels, every thing which they have to carry to any distance, whether dry goods or liquids, which are thus preserved from insects and dust, besides being kept very fresh; and therefore butter, honey, cheese, and similar articles are enclosed in vessels made of the skins of these animals.

The presents which Jacob's sons carried to their brother Joseph, Gen. xliii. 11, particularly the balm and honey, were, therefore, probably forwarded in little vessels made of kid skins: to which mode of transporting provisions, Homer somewhere refers.

The bottles made of skin, resemble the "Girba" described by Mr. Bruce in his travels through Abyssinia, vol. iv. p. 334.—

"This," he says, "is an ox's skin square, and the edges sewed together very artificially by a double seam, which does not let out water, much resembling that upon the best English cricket balls. An opening is left at the top, like the bung of a cask: around this hole the skin is gathered to the size of a large handful, which is tied round with whipcord when the vessel is filled. These girbas contain about sixty gallons each, and two of them are the load of a camel. They are all besmeared on the outside with grease, as well to hinder the water from oozing through, as to prevent its being evaporated by the action of the sun upon the skin, which, in fact, happened to us twice, so as to put us in imminent danger of perishing with thirst."



Ancient Books and Scrolls.

ON THE FORMS OF ANCIENT BOOKS AND SCROLLS,

Particularly those mentioned in the Scriptures.

We here present our youthful readers with the form of an ancient book, as held with both hands by a young man, who is supposed to be reading it with great earnestness. It is probably meant for some serious treatise. The form of the page, and the direction of the separating column are distinctly marked, and clearly show that it was read down the narrow way of the roll, one end of the book being rolled inward, and the other outward. It is evident that these books might be very small, so that when the prophet Ezekiel and St. John were directed to eat a book, it was by no means a folio that was presented to them, for that mentioned in the Revelations is expressly called *a little book*, and might be much less than the one here represented. Books are often, but not always, spoken of as rolls in Scripture. The action of unrolling and rolling up

again a book, is evidently attributed to our Lord in the fourth chapter of St. Luke, where it is said, at the seventeenth verse: "and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written," or literally, *and unrolling the book he found the passage*, from whence it should seem that he might not open it at that very passage, but might have unrolled the book till he came to that part of Isaiah's prophecy, there quoted. This is confirmed by what is afterwards said at the twentieth verse: "And he closed the book, and he gave it to the minister;" or, *so rolling up the book, he gave it to the servant of the Synagogue.*

Several sorts of materials were anciently used in making books; plates of lead and copper, the barks of trees, bricks, stone, and even wood, were the first materials employed to engrave those things upon, which men desired to transmit to posterity. Josephus the Jewish historian, speaks of two columns, one of brick, on which the children of Seth wrote, or engraved their inventions and astronomical discoveries. Porphyry mentions some pillars

preserved in Crete, on which the sacrifices of the Corybantes were recorded. Hesiod's works were originally written upon tables of lead; the laws of Solon upon wooden planks; and the Ten Commandments delivered to Moses, upon stone.

Tables of boxwood and ivory were common among the ancients; and their wooden tablets were frequently covered with wax, that they might easily write, and if they pleased, afterwards erase what they had written. The leaves of the palm-tree were afterwards used instead of wooden tablets, together with the finest and thinest part of the bark of trees, such as the lime, the ash, the maple, and the elm; and as these barks were rolled up in order to be removed with greater ease, the rolls were called *volumina*, or volumes, a name afterwards generally applied to rolls of paper or parchment.

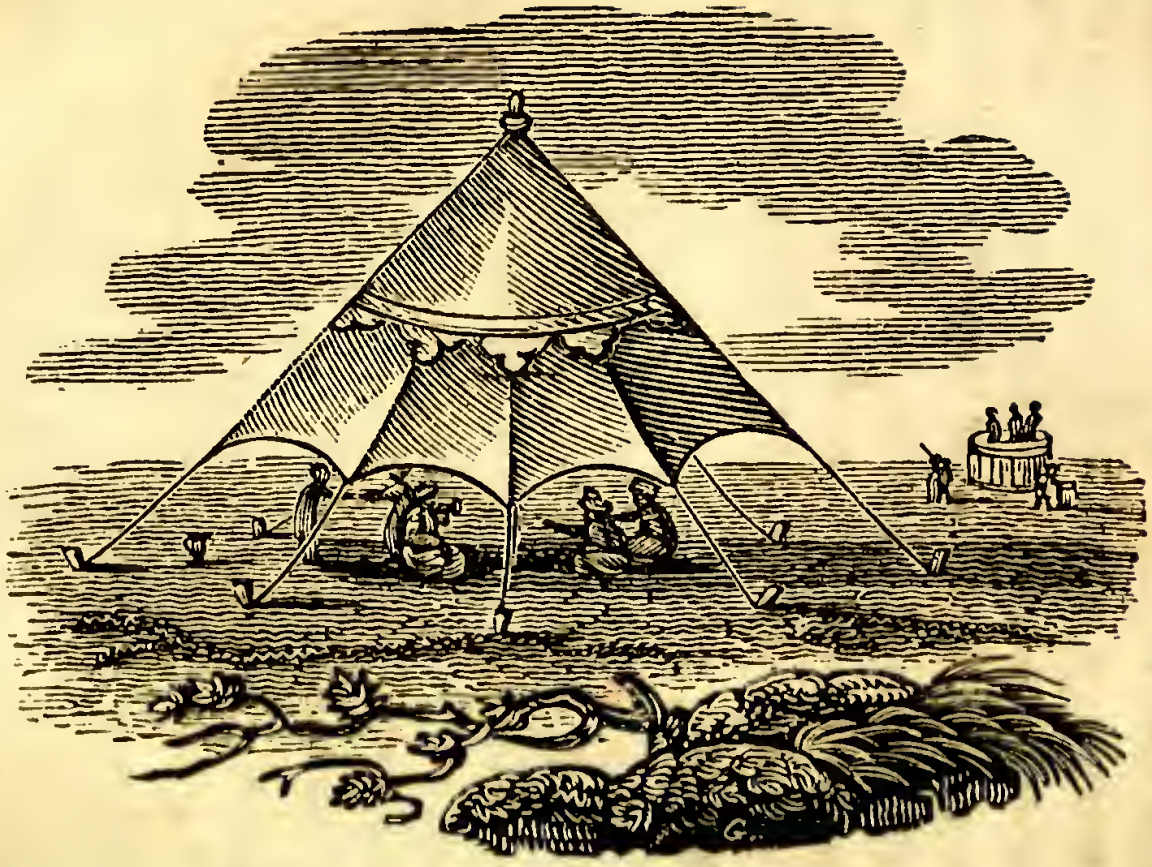
The other two figures represent an ancient inkstand and pen. The inkstand consists of two parts, one for red, and the other for black ink, one of which is shut, and the other open.

The pen is a reed of considerable length and magnitude. Whether the bands round it are merely joints of the reed, or something added to strengthen it, is not certain, but probably the latter, and the reader should be informed, that these representations are copied from some ancient pictures dug out of the ruins of Herculaneum, a once famous city of Italy, which was destroyed by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, A. D. 79.

We cannot close this brief illustration without calling the attention of our young friends to an important fact. The books of the ancients were, of course, all manuscript, and were therefore scarce and dear. The current of knowledge was consequently confined to a very narrow channel, and until the invention of printing, in the latter end of the fifteenth century, books could only be procured by a few wealthy persons; a Bible could scarcely be obtained for less than *thirty pounds sterling;* but, since that providential invention, books have gradually become more plentiful, and consequently cheaper, until at length the Sa-

cred Scriptures may be obtained for a very small sum, and useful information of every kind at a moderate expense.

How then ought we to prize the inestimable advantages we enjoy; how sedulously improve our opportunities of becoming wise unto salvation, and performing our respective duties in the present life? Reader, be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, since for all these things, he will bring thee into judgment.



Tents mentioned in Scripture.

ON THE TENTS MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE.

The Patriarchs lived in temporary dwellings of various kinds. These dwellings were slightly constructed for temporary residence, so as to be put up and taken down with great despatch. Such were their tents of various forms and sizes. Some of them were large and commodious; others small and inconvenient; some mean and some magnificent.

That tents were set apart for the different sexes, appears from Gen. xxiv. 67, where it is said Isaac brought Rebecca into his mother Sarah's tent; and from Gen. xxxi. 33, where we learn that Laban went into Jacob's, Leah's, and into the maid-servant's tent.

A tent may be made more capacious by raising and further opening or extending it; and strengthened by driving the stakes deeper into the ground. Hence Isaiah, liv. 2, says "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen

thy stakes." One of these stakes, nails, or tent-pins Jael drove through Sisera's temples until she fixed it in the earth, Judges iv. 21. A wooden pin could scarcely have been hard enough for this cruel purpose, or for penetrating hard earth, gravel, &c. and hence there is little doubt that these stakes were of brass, or of iron.

The dream of the Midianite, who thought he saw a loaf of barley bread overturn a tent, either tends to prove that they were very slightly held by their cords and pins, or that the loaf which overturned it, was impelled by an irresistible force, see Judges vii. 13.—Hezekiah, in Isaiah xxxviii. 12, exclaims, "Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent." This strongly intimates the wandering lives they led, and the shortness of their stay in any place.

Tents are to this day used in travelling through the deserts of Asia, see the view of Mount Tabor, page 91. They vary in their colours; for the coverings were sometimes formed of rams' or goats' skins, and of goats' hair, and were sometimes quite black, as are

those of the Arabians, to which the Spouse, Cant. i. 5, alludes, where she says, "I am black as the tents of *Kedar;* that is, *Arabia.* Such, in all probability, was the tent spread by Jacob, Gen. xxxiii. 18—19, in the field he bought of Shechem's father.

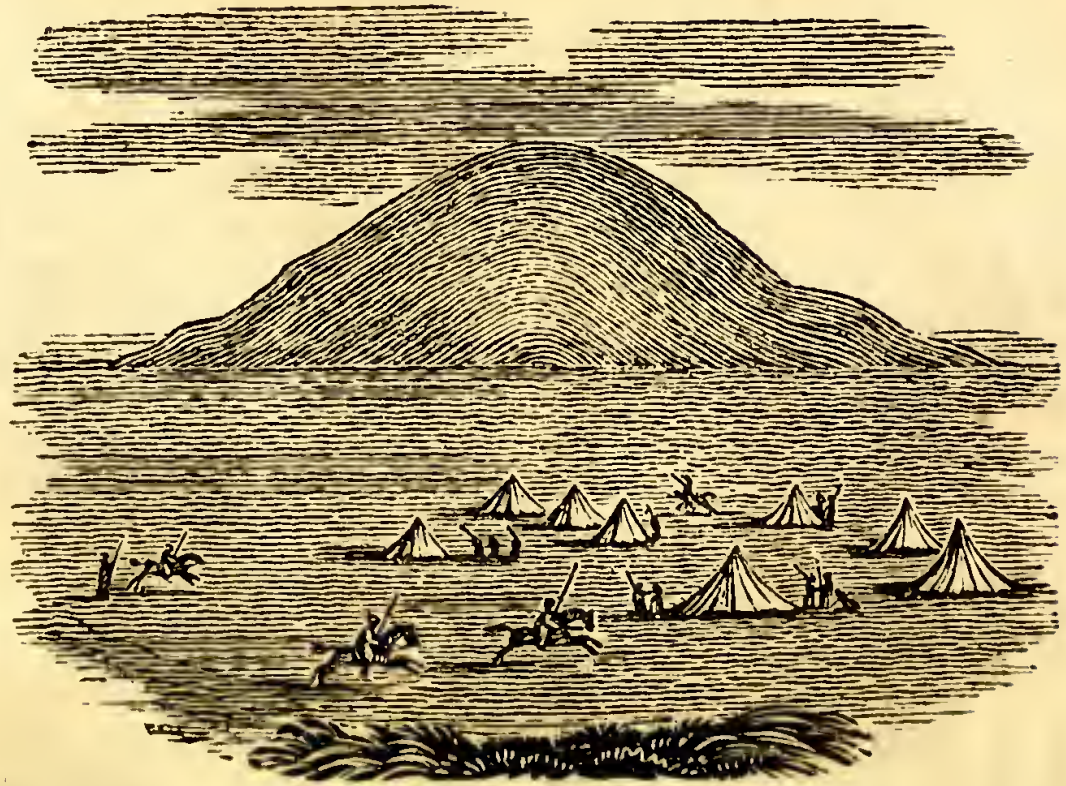
The words "every man to his tents, O Israel," (see 2 Samuel xx. 1, and 1 Kings xii. 16,) were invitations to the Israelites to leave their cities, and take the field in war. It was the ancient way of summoning the people to arms, and hence we plainly see that at that time, tents had ceased to be the only kind of dwelling in use, though Acts xviii. 3, shows that down to the time of the apostles, tents, at least that portable sort suitable for travellers, were still used.

There is strong reason to suppose that the occupation, at which Paul and Aquila wrought, means either tent-making literally, as we have translated it; or something similar to the trade of a house carpenter among us, which would very probably also include the business of tent-making among the nations of the east.

The prophet Isaiah xiii. 20, seems to lay

great stress on one token of the total ruin of Babylon, by saying, "neither shall the Arabian pitch *tent* there; neither shall shepherd dwell there;" as if he had exclaimed, not even a solitary shepherd, a wandering Arab, the transitory resident of an hour! The same inspired writer, xl. 22, says, "he stretched out the Heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in." This idea strikingly applies to a circular tent like that here presented to our readers. It is equally expanded all round. It can be opened or folded up, spread out, or rolled together like a scroll; and in this state, "spanned by the hand." Isaiah xlviii. 13.

The shaking of the pillars or supporters of a tent, is alluded to by Job xxvi. 11, where he speaks of the trembling of the pillars of Heaven at the reproof of the Almighty. This explanation may serve also to illustrate many similar figures that were never intended to be literally understood.



Mount Tabor.

MOUNT TABOR,

AS SEEN FROM

THE GREAT PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

The celebrated traveller from whose works we have taken this view of Mount Tabor, was prevented from visiting it by the fear of being plundered by the Arab banditti, who at that time particularly infested the great plain of Esdraelon, upon one side of which, Mount Tabor stands. It is entirely detached from any other mountain, and appears of a conical form, strongly resembling an island environed by the sea. The top consists of a spacious and well cultivated level surface, inhabited by numerous Arab families, who subsist by pillage and robbery, and are the terror of the surrounding country.

This singular eminence is often mentioned in Holy Writ. Upon it the Midianitish kings slew the brethren of Gideon, by whom those kings were afterwards slain: Judges viii. 18

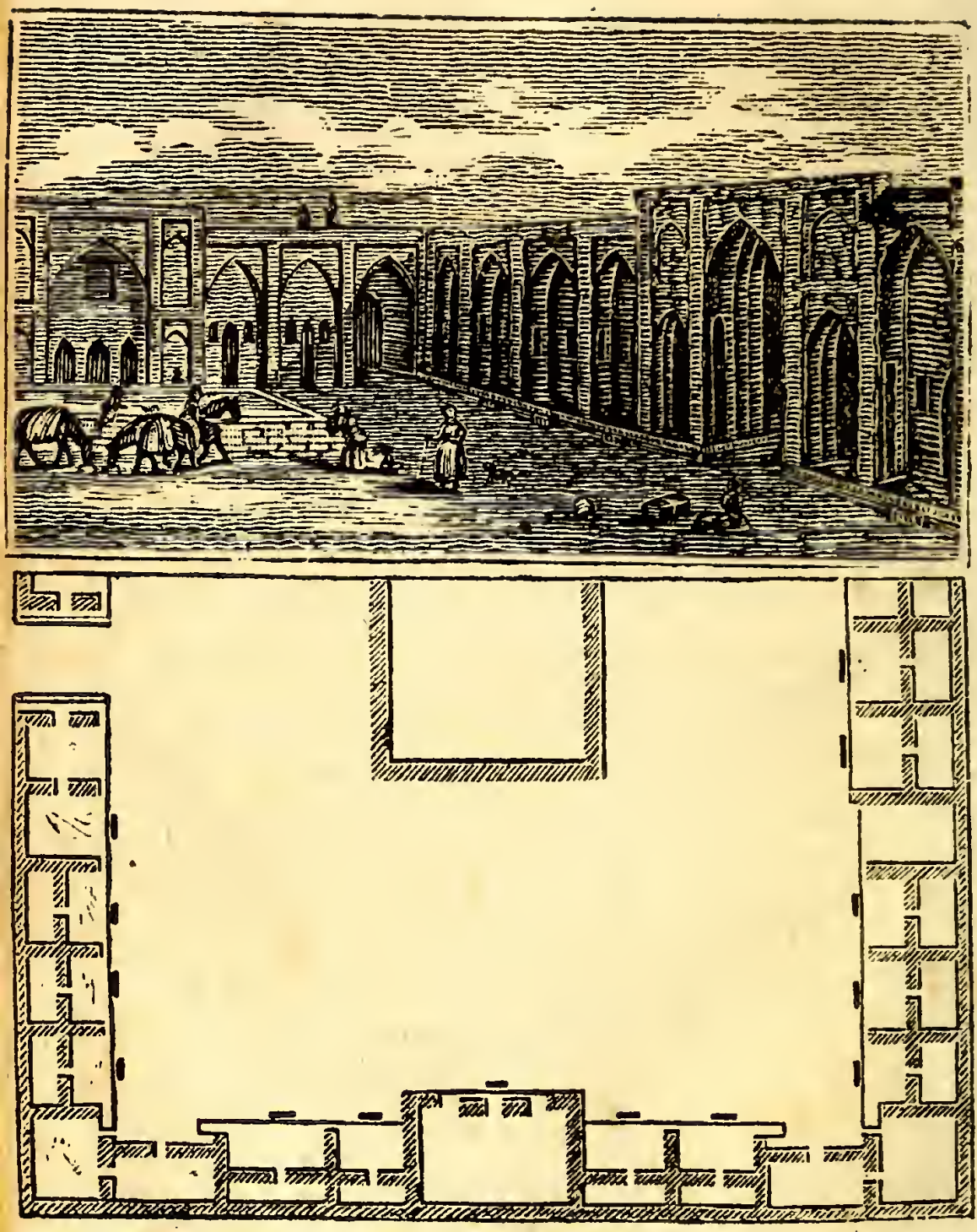
—21. David, (see Psalm lxxxix. 12) speaks of Mount Tabor in such terms as intimate that it was a remarkable station in his day, and the same idea is further confirmed by the prophet Jeremiah, xlvi. 18; and by Hosea, v. 1, who accuses the priests, king, and people of Israel of being like a net spread upon Mount Tabor; where nets were employed to ensnare such birds as were fit for the table, which were found in great numbers in this delightful part of the Holy Land.

On the great plain of Esdraelon, the most fertile part of all the land of Canaan, the tribe of Issachar rejoiced in their tents: Deut. xxxiii. 18. Here the second of Samuel's three predictions was verified by Saul: 1 Samuel x. 3. In the first ages of Jewish history, as well as during the Roman Empire, and in the Crusades, *Holy Wars* or *Wars of the Cross*, as they were impiously called; which were carried on by the monarchs of Europe many hundred years ago, under pretence of recovering the Holy Land from the Turks or Saracens; and even in still later times, it has been the scene of many a memorable contest. Here it was

that Barak descending with his ten thousand from Mount Tabor, Judges iv. 6—13, discomfited Sisera and "all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him," when "all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword, and there was not a man left:" Judges iv. 13, 15, 16. Here also it was that Josiah, king of Judah, fought in disguise against Necho king of Egypt and fell by the arrows of his antagonist; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20—25, when so great were the lamentations for his death, that the mourning for Josiah became an ordinance in Israel. The great mourning in Jerusalem, foretold by Zechariah, xii. 11, is said to be as the lamentation in the plain of Esdraelon; or, according to the language of the prophet, "as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the *valley of Megiddon.*" Warriors belonging to almost every country under heaven, have pitched their tents upon the great plain of Esdraelon, and beheld the various banners of their nations wet with the dews of Tabor and of Hermon. Josephus, the renowned Jewish historian, often mentions this very remarkable part of

the Holy Land, and always under the appellation of *the great plain.* It has been a chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country, from the days of Nebuchodonosor king of the Assyrians, in the history of whose war with Arphaxad, it is mentioned as the great plain of *Esdrelom*, see Apocrypha, Judith i. 8, down to the disastrous march of the French army from Egypt into Syria.

Like every other part of the Holy Land, this great plain and celebrated mountain afford indisputable evidence of the truth of the Bible, for they still retain every mark of identity, and are possessed by various unbelieving Gentile nations: while the Jews who once inherited them, are scattered all over the habitable globe, according to those awful predictions of their own prophets, with which the Sacred Scriptures abound.



The Caravansera.

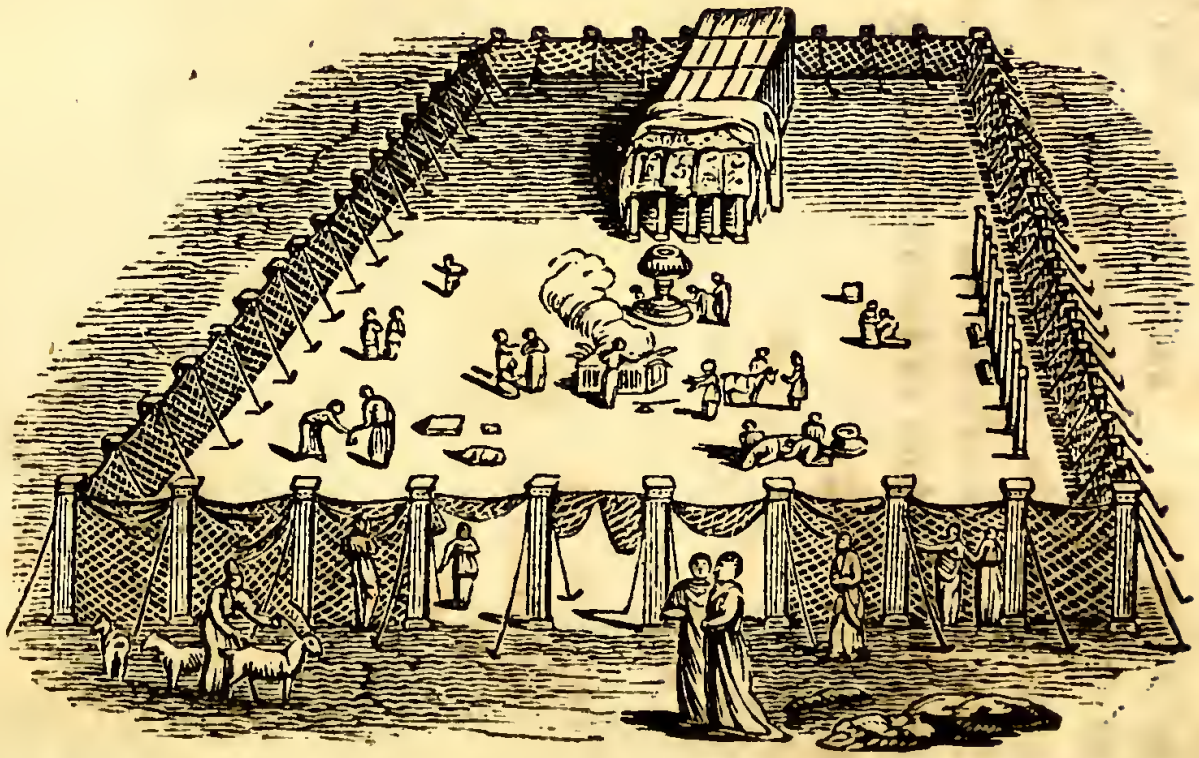
THE CARAVANSERA.

Eastern inns, or *Caravanseras*, which is their Asiatic name, are of different kinds. Some are small buildings, placed generally by the side of a fountain, at proper distances on the public roads, to afford refreshments and a temporary shelter from the rain, or during the night. Such probably, was that mentioned, Gen. xlii. 27, and xliii. 21, where one of Jacob's sons, on their return from Egypt, stopped to give provender to his ass, and there discovered Joseph's cup in his sack. And the same kind of way-side inn is probably intended in Luke x. 34, to which the good Samaritan conveyed the poor object of his pious compassion.

Other caravanseras especially those in towns, like that above represented, are usually large square buildings, with a court in the middle of them, encompassed with galleries, and having arches, or chambers, all round, where travellers rest themselves, or make

their lodging as well as they can. To this kind the evangelist, Luke ii. 7, apparently refers, where he records that—"there was no room for Joseph and Mary in the inn," that is, that every chamber was pre-occupied. These chambers are generally let at a high rate by the keeper of the caravansera, although they contain no furniture whatever, and this circumstance alone will go far to show what poor accommodation those places must have afforded to the mother of our blessed Lord, and in what degrading circumstances the Prince of Life and Glory descended to appear among men. It has long been customary in the east, for travellers to carry their own bedding, kitchen utensils, &c. and the custom probably prevailed as far back as the incarnation of our blessed Saviour; but as all the chambers were then engaged, Joseph and Mary were obliged to accept of shelter in that part of the building allotted to the beasts, so that, in the words of the inspired writer—"She brought forth her first born son and laid him in a manger." So low did the Redeemer stoop to manifest his love to us, and

to effect the grand purpose of man's redemption. An elegant writer has truly said, "that pride is not made for man," for surely, if every human being were to consider the cause of this amazing abasement on the part of him, who is God over all, blessed for ever, it would not only eradicate every particle of pride, but humble him in the dust during the remainder of his life.



The Tabernacle in the Wilderness.

THE TABERNACLE IN THE WILDERNESS.

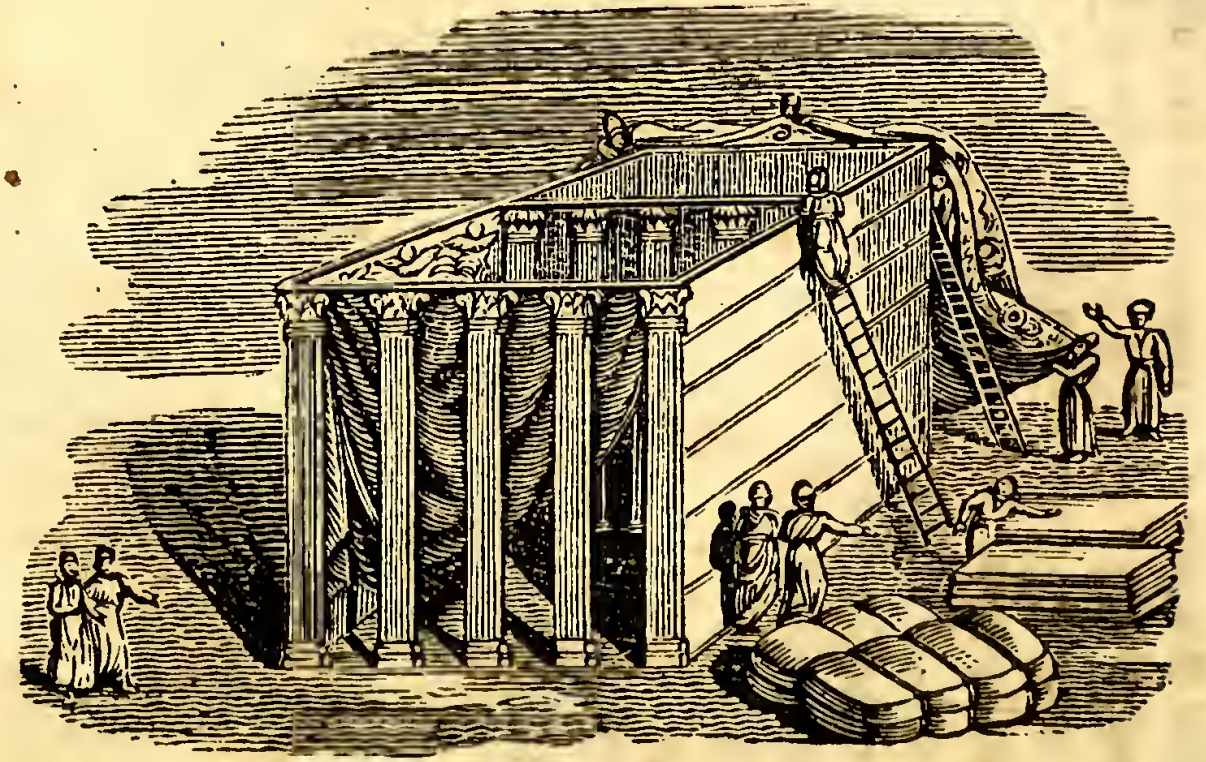
The preceding is a general view of the Court of the Tabernacle, and of the situation of the various utensils it contained—see Exod. xxv. We observe first of all the pillars marking an enclosure. These pillars were seven feet and a half high, the enclosure they formed was about 150 feet long, and 75 feet broad. In the centre of the front appears a kind of entrance, formed by hanging tapestry which could be drawn up occasionally, like the entrance curtain to a tent. The intervals between the other pillars are closed by a strong kind of *net-work*, as some render the original word, which in our translation, Exod. xxvi. 1, is called *fine-twined linen*, but this was so loosely twined or combined, that what was transacted in the Court was visible in a considerable degree, though veiled, to the people without. Advancing to the centre of the Court, we find first the altar of burnt-offerings, Exod. xxvii. 1, and next the laver for

the ablutions, Exod. xxx. 17, 18, and thirdly, the tabernacle itself, or a kind of tent, to the honour of which, as the residence of glory and holiness, the whole service is referred. On the right hand of the Court are the pillars, blocks, &c. necessary to secure and slaughter the victims brought to be offered on the altar.

We intend hereafter to call the attention of our readers more particularly to the Tabernacle itself, and having introduced the above sketch, to give them a general idea of its external appearance, we shall conclude by calling to their minds the intention of Almighty God in commanding the Israelites to bring so many different kinds of offerings in order to build the Tabernacle, and prepare the various utensils necessary for the service thereof—see Exod. xxvi. and xxvii.

"God," says Dr. Clarke, "requires that they (the Israelites) should build him a tent, suited in some sort to his dignity and eminence: because he was to act as their king, and to dwell among them; and they were to consider themselves as his subjects, and in this character to bring him presents, which was

considered to be the duty of every subject appearing before his prince,"—see Exod. xxiii. 15, the last clause of which verse refers to the universal practice of eastern nations in bringing presents as a token of submission and fidelity to their governors, in the words, "and none shall appear before me empty."



The Tabernacle.

THE TABERNACLE.

In the preceding a general view of the Tabernacle, and of the surrounding court, with the various implements of the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, is introduced. The present subject is the Tabernacle itself. It was about fifty-five feet long, eighteen feet wide, and eighteen feet high, being divided into two parts. The first part was called the *Holy Place*, which was about thirty-seven feet long by eighteen wide. In this part were placed the table of shew-bread, the golden candlestick, and the golden altar of incense. The second part was called the *Holiest of Holies;* this was eighteen feet long and as many broad, and contained the ark of the covenant. The second part, called the Sanctuary, or Holiest of Holies, was divided from the holy place by a curtain or veil, of very rich cloth, which hung on four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with plates of gold, their bases being of brass.

On the west, north, and south sides, the Tabernacle was enclosed by boards or planks

of the same wood as the pillars, overlaid with plates of gold, having also bases of brass. These boards were eight in number on the west side, but twenty on the north and south sides. They were all about eighteen feet high, and two feet and a half wide, and were let into each other by two tenons above and below. As the whole of the Tabernacle was moveable, and might be taken down, these boards were carried by two bases, wherein were two mortice holes, by which they were joined together. To support them, each had five golden rings at convenient distances; through which were passed five poles of shittim wood, covered with plates of gold, which supported the whole.

The Tabernacle had no window, but was covered by several curtains, which the sketch represents the workmen about to fix in their proper places. The curtain first on the inside was of a hyacinth colour, striped with purple, scarlet, and crimson. Over this were other curtains or coverings of goat's hair, which defended the rich curtain before described from the sun and the rain. There was no cur-

tain in front, but only on the sides, and behind; so that at the entrance of the Tabernacle, the first rich curtain afore-mentioned might be seen, which enclosed the whole front. Over these coverings of goat's hair were two others; one of sheep skins dyed red, the other of sheep skins dyed azure blue.

The priests entered the Holy place every morning to offer incense, and to put out the lamps; and went in every evening to re-light them. The High Priests alone could enter into the Holiest of Holies; and even he, only once a year, upon the great day of atonement; except in extraordinary cases, in order to consult the Lord: but he never entered without the deepest reverence and due preparation.

The entrance of the Tabernacle looked *east*, the sanctuary *west*, and the two sides *north* and *south*. This tent was, as it were, the dwelling of the God of Israel, who was considered as residing in the midst of the camp. Round about it were encamped the twelve tribes: Judah, Zebulon, and Issachar, on the east; Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, to the west: Dan, Asher, and Napthali to the north;

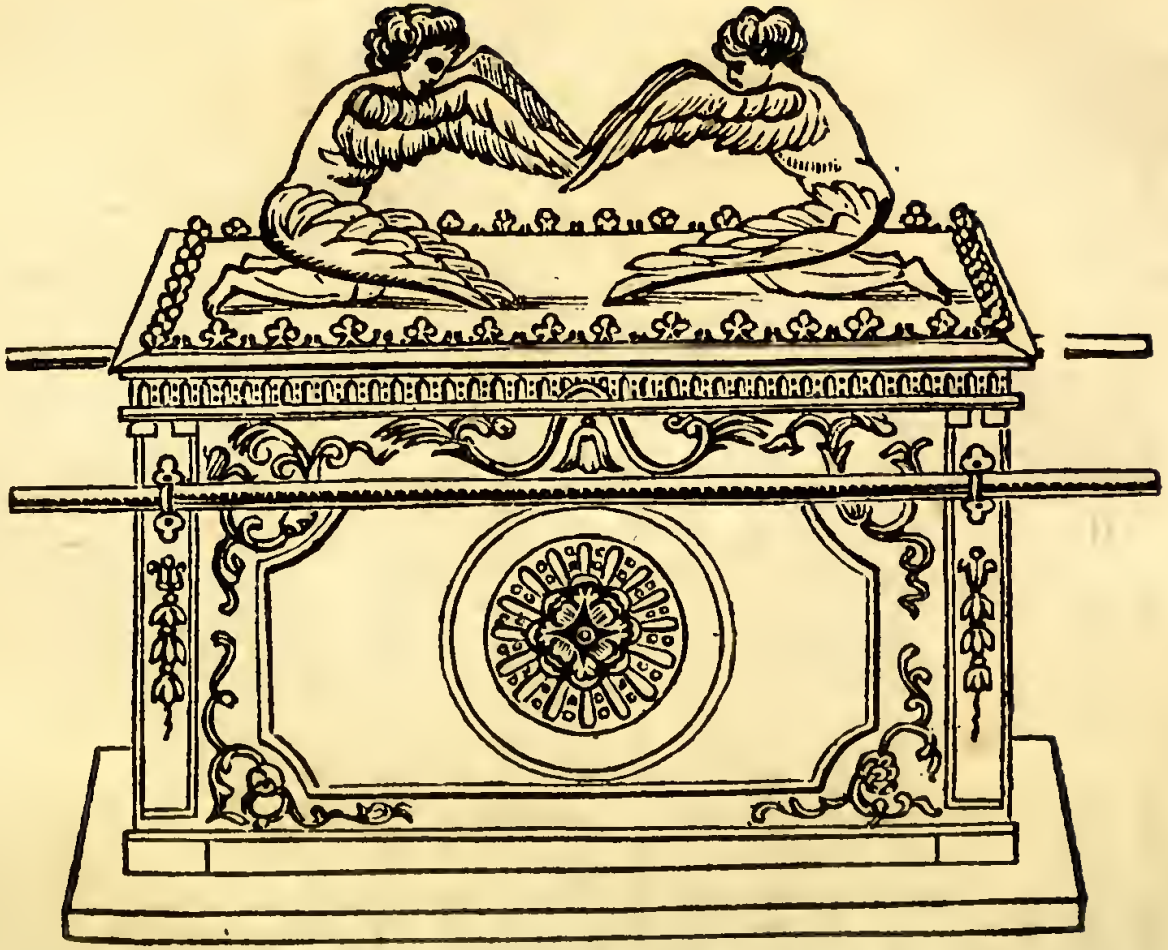
and Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, to the south. The tribe of Levi being entirely employed in the sacred offices of the priesthood, were placed all round nearer the Tabernacle; Moses and Aaron on the east, the family of Gershom, west, that of Merari north, and that of Kohath south.

The Tabernacle, or Tent of the Covenant, must always be distinguished from the Tabernacle or Tent of the Congregation, wherein the people of Israel assembled to transact their ordinary temporal affairs. The former is also called the Tabernacle of the Testimony, and the Tabernacle of the Lord. It was constructed by Moses, from the pattern shown to him by God himself in Mount Sinai, and was first set up and consecrated at the foot of that celebrated mountain, on the first day of the second year after the Israelites were delivered from their Egyptian oppressors, about 2514 years after the creation of the world, and 1490 years before the incarnation of that Great High Priest, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom and to whose coming these rites and ceremonies expressly referred.

This Tabernacle was the place of prayer, and of the public service of God, Lev. xvii. 3—6, Matt. xxi. 13. It signified the church, which is the habitation of God through the Spirit, 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. ii. 19—22. Rev. xxi. 2, 3, and was a visible sign of God's *presence* and *protection*, Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Ezek. xxxvii. 27, 28. 1 Kings vi. 12, 13; and of his leading them to his heavenly glory: for as the high priest entered into the tabernacle, and through the veil into the most Holy Place, where God dwelt; so Christ entered into the Holy of Holies, and we also enter through the veil, that is to say his flesh. Thus the sanctuary is to be applied as a type to the person of Jesus Christ, John ii. 19—21. Heb. viii. 2. ix. 11, 12; also to every Christian, 1 Cor. vi. 19: and to the church of God, 1 Tim. iii. 15. Heb. iii. 6. Heb. x. 21; hence it was because of the very extensive signification of this building, that the different things belonging to it, are so particularly set down by Moses, and so variously applied by the prophets and by the apostles. As the dwelling of the Almighty in this Tabernacle was the

highest proof of his grace and mercy towards the Israelites, so it signified Christ's dwelling by faith in the hearts of believers, by which they receive the highest proof of their reconciliation to God, and of his love and favour to them.

It is extremely remarkable that the heathens borrowed their best things from divine revelation. A striking instance here presents itself. In the idolatrous temples of Greece and Rome, there were a Holy and a Most Holy Place, corresponding to, and evidently copied from those of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and of the Temple at Jerusalem. They even had portable temples, to imitate the moveable Tabernacle, as the shrines of Diana, mentioned, Acts xix. 24, were something of this kind.



The Ark of the Covenant.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

The Ark of the Covenant, wherein the tables of stone containing the Ten Commandments were deposited by Moses, Exod. xxxvii. 1, after he had received them from the hand of God himself, was made of shittim wood, covered with plates of gold. Upon the top of it all round the edge, was a beautiful gold rim, or crown, as above represented, bordering the mercy seat upon which the cherubim appear. It had also four rings of gold, two on each side, in which the staves or poles, used to carry it, were placed. In the Ark, also, Aaron's rod that budded, Numb. xvii. 8, and the pot of the manna, Exodus xvi. 33, 34, were laid up to be preserved as memorials of the omnipotence and goodness of God. After the passage of Jordan by the Israelites, headed by the Levites bearing the Ark, Numb. x. 33, Josh. iii. 15, 16, the Ark continued some time at Gilgal, whence it was removed to Shiloh, 1 Sam. iv. 3, 11, from

thence the Israelites carried it into battle, where it fell into the hands of the Philistines. In Saul's reign, the Philistines having sent it back, it was placed at Kirjath-jearim, 1 Sam. vii. 1, whence David conveyed it to the house of Obededom, 2 Samuel vi. 10, and afterwards to his palace, called the city of David, on Mount Zion, 2 Samuel vi. 12.

From the palace of his father, Solomon removed it to the place called the Holiest of Holies, prepared expressly for it in the gorgeous temple which he built, wherein it remained till the kings of Judah giving themselves up to idolatry and wickedness, the priests were obliged to remove the ark to preserve it from profanation. It was brought back to the sanctuary by the command of good king Josiah, 2 Chron. xxxv. 3, and remained there till Manasseh took it away, soon after which Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Babylonians, from which period there is no certain account concerning it, though some think it was carried with other spoils to Babylon, but never returned, as both Jews and Christians agree

that there was no Ark of the Covenant in the second temple.

As the Ark was a sacred chest, or coffer, the little chests or *cistæ* of the heathens, wherein they locked up their most sacred things for religious uses, appear to have been imitations of the Ark of the Covenant; though some, for what good reason does not distinctly appear, think they refer to Noah's Ark. Elsewhere we have treated at some length concerning the cherubim, which are beautifully represented in the above elegant sketch, where the kneeling posture appears more appropriate and reverential than that of standing, as in the design already before our readers.

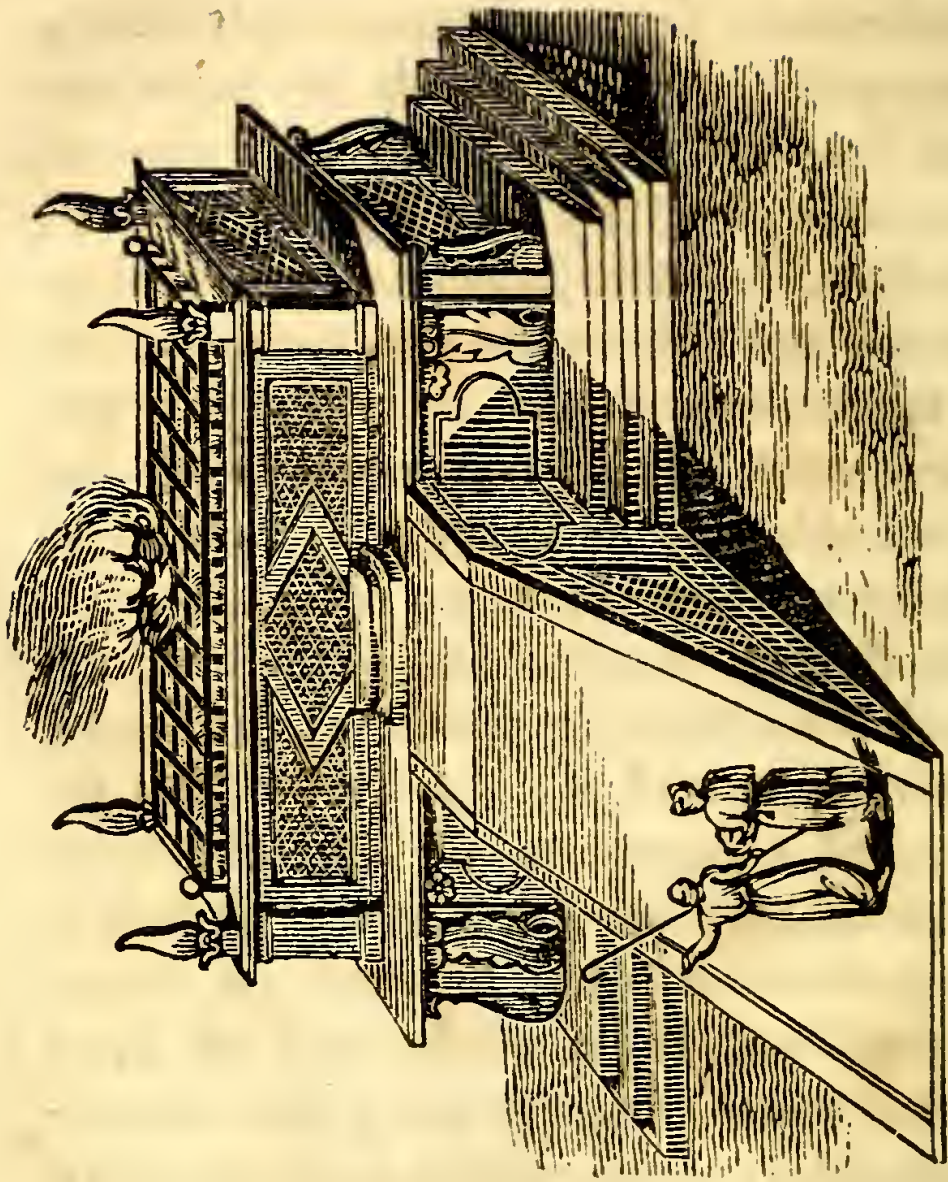
The Brazen Laver.

THE BRAZEN LAVER.

In our general view of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness with the surrounding Court, the reader will observe, that nearly in the middle of the Court stands a small sketch of the Brazen Laver, a further representation of which, upon a larger scale, is here given from the most approved authorities. We wish to impress the fact, that as there are very few, if any, paintings or sculptured representations now in being, which furnish the exact form of the sacred utensils employed in the Levitical Rites, or from which accurate plans of the Tabernacle or of Solomon's Temple could be obtained, learned and pious men have endeavoured to supply the deficiency by drawing from the descriptions which the Bible contains. These descriptions are found in those parts where Moses relates the instructions which he received from God to prepare the Tabernacle, and every thing belonging thereto, according to the pattern shown to him in

the Mount, for which see the six last chapters of the book of Exodus. On this account it is not surprising that different persons understand these ancient scriptural descriptions differently; for though the descriptions are plain and explicit as to the use of the things described, they admit of variations in the form of the different utensils. Thus the Brazen Laver, though universally admitted to have been placed in the centre of the Court of the Tabernacle, opposite to the door of the Sanctuary, and to have consisted of a large brass reservoir or basin of water which was drawn out of it by cocks, for washing the hands and feet of the officiating priests, and also for cleansing the entrails and legs of the sacrifices; is by some persons supposed to have resembled the above representation. In Exodus xxxviii. 8, we learn that the foot of the Brazen Laver, was formed out of the *looking glasses* of the women that assembled at the door of the Tabernacle, which those pious females had offered for the service of the sanctuary, in the same way that we are told that (Exodus xxxv. 29,) "every man and woman whose heart made them willing," brought a

willing offering unto the Lord. Our readers should be here informed, that *glass*, if not entirely a modern invention, has been generally employed for domestic purposes only since a comparatively recent period; the brass mirrors, therefore, here spoken of, like those of iron, tin, and silver, used by the Romans, Grecians, and other Pagan nations, were polished plates of those different metals, and by no means inadequate for every necessary purpose, though certainly not equal to the modern looking-*glasses*, properly so called. In this instance there appears a remarkable coincidence between sacred and profane history, which is worthy of observation, but the most important inferences to be drawn from the Mosaical account are, the direct relation which the particulars of that account bear to the doctrine of redemption, and the Gospel of truth and grace, which came by Jesus Christ; and the singular and unanimous willingness here shown, even by the hard-hearted and stiff-necked Jews to sacrifice every thing, however pleasing or valuable, for the service and honour of God.



The Altar of Burnt Offering.

THE ALTAR OF BURNT OFFERING.

Altars are undoubtedly as ancient as sacrifices, which were instituted after the fall of man, to signify that it was only through the sacrificial atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he could receive the pardon of his sins, and be restored to the spiritual image and favour of his divine Creator. The earliest altars of which we find any express testimony, are those of Noah and Abraham—Gen. viii. 20, xii. 7, xxii. 9, though the offerings which Cain and Abel brought, Gen. iv. 3, 4, necessarily imply something of the kind to have been known in their day. These patriarchal altars were formed of rude materials. They were easily built, and therefore in general temporary; hence we find the altar which Jacob set up at Bethel, was merely the stone on which he rested, Gen. xxviii. 18, 22, such also was Gideon's altar, Judges vi. 24, and from Exodus xx. 24, it appears that the first altar which Moses erected by the command of God was made of earth. The Jews often gave the name "altars" to a kind of tables raised in the country or fields, on which sacrifices were

offered to God; thus we often read that in various places an altar was built unto the Lord.

Under the Mosaical dispensation, the principal altars of the Jews were the altar of incense, the table or altar of shew-bread, which we have elsewhere described, and the altar of burnt offering here depicted. This altar was placed towards the east end of the Court of the Tabernacle, and at such a convenient distance from it, that the smoke of the fire which was constantly burning on the altar, might not sully the costly furniture of the Tabernacle. It was about eight feet square, and five feet and a half high. It was made of shittim wood plated with brass, and had four brass rings, through which were put two bars, by which it was carried on the shoulders of the priests. The four horns, one at each of the four corners are supposed to have served for the steadying the altar when carried, and for tying the victims, according to the allusion of David, Psalm cxviii. 27; but it is not said, whether they were straight or curved. The fire of this altar was kept upon a square grate, suspended by rings at the corners, and possi-

bly by chains in the cavity of the altar. The fire was considered as sacred, having first descended upon it from heaven, Lev. ix. 24; it was therefore never suffered to go out, Lev. vi. 13. From hence, probably, the Chaldeans and Persians borrowed their notion of the sacred fire, which they preserved with religious care and attention; a custom which afterwards passed from them to the Greeks and Romans.

This altar was beaten down and destroyed by the Babylonians at the burning of the temple, but it was replaced, Ezra iii. 3, on the return of the Jews from captivity. It then formed a large pile of unhewn stone, forty-eight feet square at the bottom, and gradually diminishing to the top or hearth, which was a square of thirty-six feet, and a foot and half high. This part was made of solid brass, and from it the whole was called the brazen altar: for it cannot be imagined that it was all made of that metal. The Kibbesh, or ascent up to the altar, as seen above, was by a gentle rising of forty-eight feet long, and twenty-four broad, and led to the upper benching-in, which bordered the hearth on the top of the altar.

The heathens, among whom we may almost invariably trace the corrupted remains of Divine Institutions, at first made altars of turf; and afterwards of stone, marble, wood, and even of horn, as that of Apollo in Delos. Before temples were in use, their altars were erected in groves, in high places, and on the tops of mountains. To this the words of Moses, Lev. xxvi. 30, and the denunciations of the prophets allude—Ezek. vi. 3, Hos. x. 8. The deluded worshippers of wood and stone, or of imaginary, and even infernal idols, generally inscribed upon each altar the name or attribute of the idol to whom it was dedicated.—Hence the altar, mentioned Acts xvii. 23, found by the Apostle Paul at Athens, was inscribed to "the unknown God."

The heathen altars were of various kinds, and were dedicated to false gods, heroes, virtues, vices, diseases, reptiles; in short to every thing except the one true and ever blessed God. These altars were portable or stationary, public and private, and were also of different figures, as round, square, or triangular. They were universally turned towards the east, and

generally ornamented with sculpture and bas-relief, in addition to the inscriptions to the idols for whose worship they were built, and whose distinguishing symbols generally constituted their chief ornaments. They had horns like those of the Jews, to which the victims were fastened, and the criminals who fled for refuge to the altar laid hold of these horns, by which the ancient pagans used to swear in forming alliances, or confirming treaties of peace.

Altar is sometimes, but improperly used among Christians for a square table, placed on the eastern side of the church, where it is raised a little above the floor, and set apart for the celebration of the Eucharist. Its form does not in the least resemble the patriarchal or Jewish altars which are the undoubted originals of all others; and as the Eucharist was instituted by our Blessed Lord at supper, and upon a table, in the form of which all modern altars are made, it is more significantly called the Communion Table.

The Altar of Incense.

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

This was a small table of shittim wood, covered with plates of gold, and hence, Exod. xl. 5, called the Altar of Gold, of one cubit in length, one in width, and another in height; it had a little golden border or crown all round it, and a horn at each of the four corners, like those of the altar of Burnt-Offering, but it is not known whether they were straight or curved. This Altar was placed before the vail in the Holy Place, Exod. xxx. 6. Every morning and evening the Priest in waiting for that week, and appointed by lot for this office, offered incense of a particular composition upon this Altar, and to perform this duty entered with a smoking censer, filled with fire taken from the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, into the Holy Place where this Altar was placed, over against the Shew Bread Table, and retired as soon as he had placed the censers on the altar.

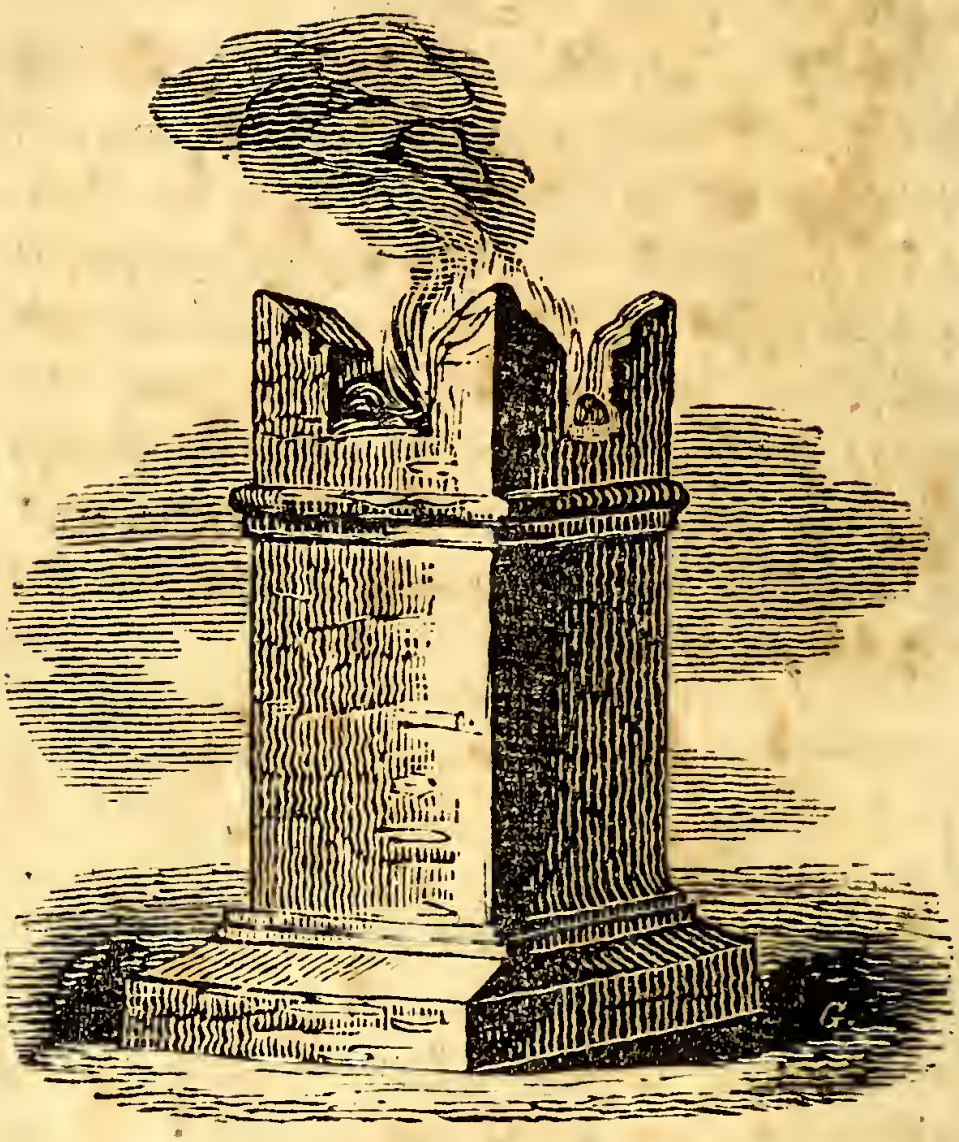
"Where so many sacrifices were offered," says Dr. Clarke, "it was essentially neces-

sary to have some pleasing perfume, to counteract the disagreeable smells that must have arisen, from the slaughter of so many animals, the sprinkling of so much blood, and the burning of so much flesh," &c. No blood was ever sprinkled on this altar, except on the day of general expiation, which happened only once in the year, Exod. xxx. 10, but the perfume was necessary in every part of the Tabernacle and its environs; it is described in the 34th, 35th, and 36th verses of the above chapter.

The *stacte* is supposed to be the same with what was afterwards called the Balm of Jericho: it is a gum which spontaneously flows from the tree producing myrrh. The *onycha* consisted of the external crust of a shell fish, which still forms the basis of East Indian perfumes. The *galbanum* was the gummy resinous juice produced by the plant called the African ferula, or bubon gummifera, out of which, when any part of it is broken, there issues a little thin milk, of a cream colour. The *frankincense* is supposed to derive its name from franc, free; because of its liberal or ready distribution of its odours. It is a

dry resinous substance, in pieces or drops of a pale yellowish or white colour, a strong smell, and a bitter acrid taste; the tree which produces it is not well known.

The Israelites were most strictly prohibited on the most awful penalties, from making any anointing oil or perfume, similar to those above described. He that should compound such, or apply any of this to any common purpose, even to smell to, Exodus xxx. 38, should be cut off, that is, excommunicated from his people, and so lose all right, title, and interest in the promises of God, and the redemption of Israel.



The Horns of the Altar.

ON THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR.

When presenting our readers with the most approved sketches of the various altars used in the Mosaic Rites, we stated that the exact form of the Horns of the Altar had not been satisfactorily ascertained; the above representation will, however, throw some further light upon the subject. This drawing was taken from an ancient *Egyptian* picture, which had been preserved by being buried in the ruins of Herculaneum, a city that was overflowed and buried by the lava of Mount Vesuvius, in the year of our Lord 79, and has become famous within the last century, by the number of curious relics of antiquity that have been dug out of its ruins.

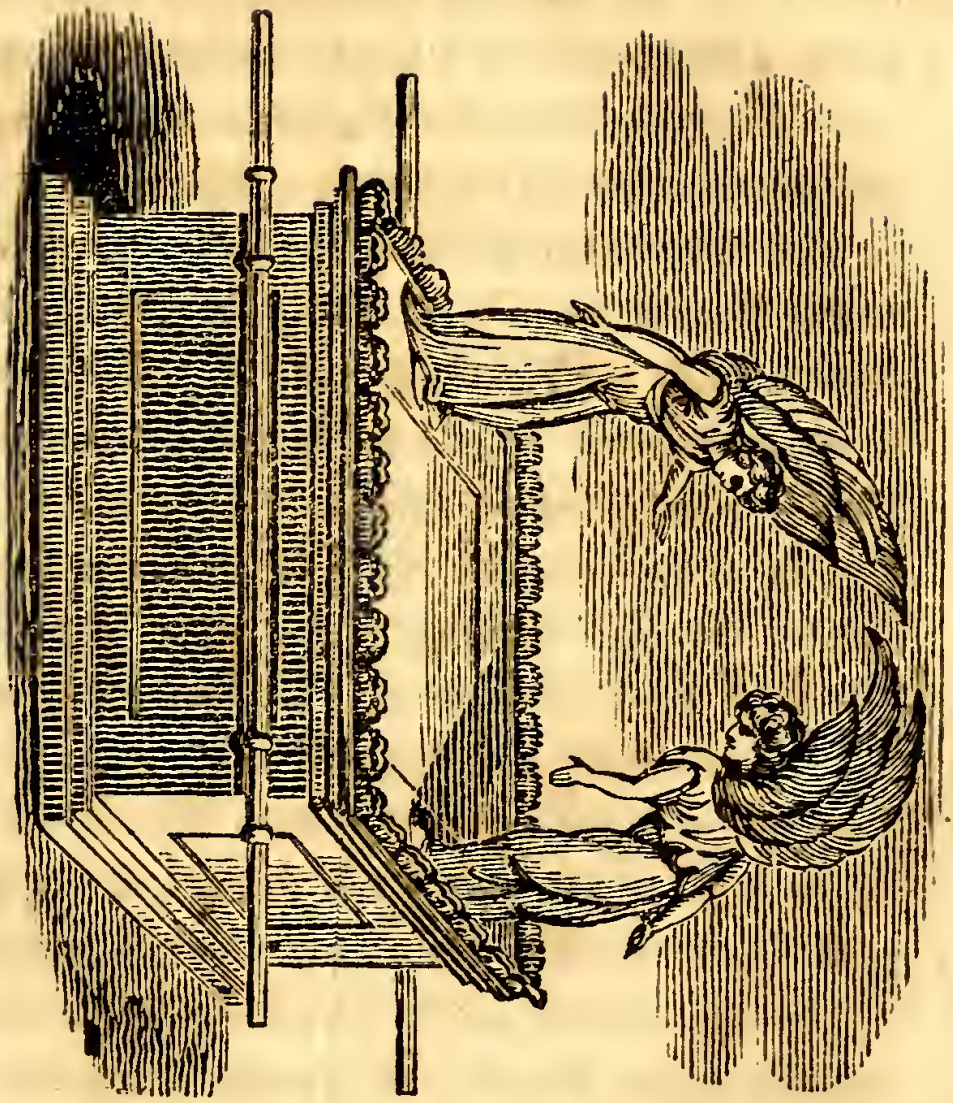
This altar has at each of its four corners a rising, which continues square to about half its height, but from thence is gradually sloped off to an edge or point; and those risings are undoubtedly what were called the horns of the Altar, and probably show their true figure. The reader is desired to compare them with

those of the Altars of Burnt-Offering, and of Incense, bearing in mind that often repeated observation, that many of the heathen nations copied the religious rites, and of course the utensils employed in those rites of the Jews.

This sufficiently accounts for the introduction of this Altar into an Egyptian painting, especially as we find that an occasional intercourse might have subsisted between the Israelites and the Egyptians, 1 Sam. xxx. 13, after the departure of the former from the country of the latter, and that Solomon himself at length took the King of Egypt's daughter to wife, 1 Kings iii. 1.

ON THE CHERUBIM COVERING THE MERCY SEAT.

The wisest and most learned men who have turned their attention to Moses's account of the cherubim covering the mercy-seat, as well as to the prophet Ezekiel's description of those emblematical creatures, do not concur in their delineations, which proves that there is but



The Cherubim covering the Mercy-Seat.

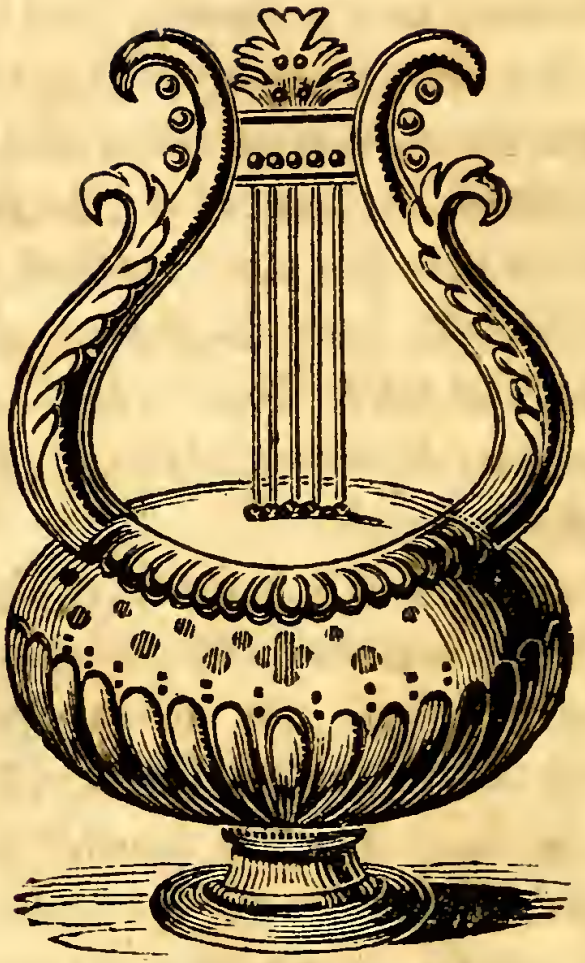
little positively known concerning them; we have, therefore, introduced the above representation of the cherubim standing upon the mercy-seat of the ark, and covering it with their wings, Exodus xxv. 20, 21, merely to furnish our young readers with a general idea upon this interesting but difficult subject.

The Cherubim are supposed to have been emblematical representations of the Eternal Power and Godhead of the Almighty; they were employed in guarding the entrance to Paradise, and keeping the way (or road) of the tree of life, Gen. iii. 24. There can be no doubt of their having been variously compounded from different animals, Ezekiel x. 14, but the difficulty of properly combining the component parts, has induced the author to whom we are indebted for the above sketch, to delineate them simply in the form of angels.

The *mercy-seat*, or *propitiatory*, upon which the cherubim stood, was properly the lid or covering of that vessel, so well known by the name of the *ark*, and *ark of the covenant*. On and before this the high-priest was to sprinkle the blood of the *expiatory* sacrifice on the great

day of *atonement;* and it was in this place that God promised to meet the people, Exodus xxv. 22, for *there* he dwelt, and *there* was the symbol of the Divine presence. At each end of this propitiatory was a cherub, and between those two cherubim this glory was manifested, hence in Scripture it is so often said, that he *dwelleth between the cherubim.* In this place God chose to give the most especial manifestations of himself; here the divine glory was to be seen; and here Moses was to come in order to consult Jehovah, relative to the management of the people.

The apostle Peter, 1 Epist. i. 12, beautifully alludes to the position of the cherubim whose wings overshadowed the mercy-seat, with "their faces one to another towards," or *looking down upon,* "the mercy-seat," where he says, "which things the angels desire to look into," for angels themselves are unable to comprehend the merciful dealings of God with the perverse and rebellious children of men, who too generally neglect and despise that covenant of grace, which deeply interests even the glorified angels of the ever-blessed God.



The Harp.

THE HARP.

The antiquity of this musical instrument, so often mentioned in scripture, is evident from the very early notice there taken of it in Gen. iv. 21. It seems to have been the very first instrument for music that was invented, and was called the *pleasant harp* by the ancient Hebrews, who employed it not only in their devotions, but in their public feasts. The harp is most frequently mentioned in the Psalms of David, who is always painted playing upon this instrument, to the sound of which both himself and the Levites danced—Ps. cl. 3, 4. From this last circumstance, it appears that the ancient harp was not so large as the modern instrument of that name, but small and portable, like the annexed representation. The authority for this sketch is unusually good: it was originally taken from a medal of Simon Maccabeus, so famous in the wars of the Jews—Maccab. xiii. 1. On this account there is strong reason to suppose that it accurately represents the kind of harp upon

which the Royal Psalmist played; for it appears very probable that Simon Maccabeus would prefer a representation of that used by the great king of Israel, for perpetuation upon his medals: and it is not likely that the form and minutest circumstances relating to David's harp, could have been forgotten, at any period of the Jewish History.

The harp was a favourite among the Britons and other northern nations: so that by law the ability to play upon it, distinguished the freeman from the slave. There is much diversity in the structure of modern harps, which have been greatly improved during the last century. They are, however, very different from the ancient instrument, not only in size but in the number of their strings, which are upwards of a hundred. In playing, it is held between the feet, and struck with the finger and thumb of both hands. It produces music much like that of the spinnet; and is more free from unavoidable imperfections than the lute, an instrument resembling a violin, but played like the guitar, by the right hand without a bow.

THE END